THE SATURDAY EVENING POST

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THE LADY AND THE LADDER

BY HARRISON RHODES

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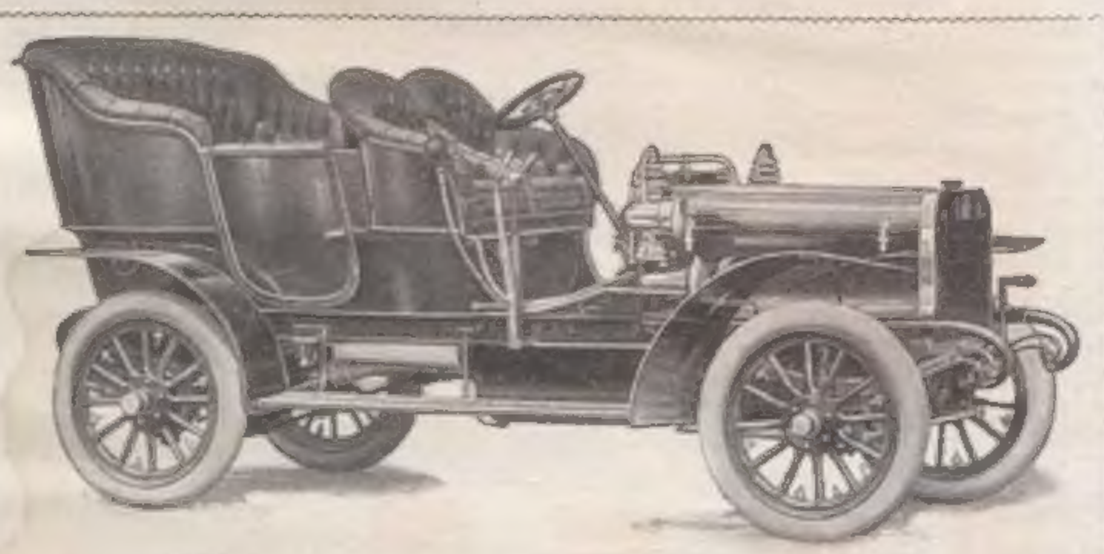

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The Lady and the Ladder

By Harrison Rhodes

The Annals of an American Countess

IT IS perhaps to be regretted, in the interest of the reader, that, so far as our heroine's early life is concerned, the truth is not, as it is often said to be, stranger than fiction. The unauthentic stories are so amazing, however, that it would really be asking too much of truth. Since it is impossible for the veracious author to cause the thrills which went through the friends of her later and more European years at the rumors spread by rival American ladies that she had been variously a typewriter, an upper housemaid, the belle of a mining camp, an actress in one of Charles Frohman's companies, a trapeze performer, and an attendant at the ribbon-counter in a Chicago department store, he can at least experience the satisfaction that comes from flatly contradicting such reports. And the truths which one can guarantee, though less sensational, are not wholly unimportant. For example, there were moments in her career when the correct figure of her income would have been as welcome to London and Paris as a cloudburst to some parched caravan traversing the Sahara. One can promise in the course of the present narrative moderately exact details as to the periods both before and after the astonishing transactions in Peoria and Milwaukee Air Line which made her name known not only in LaSalle but in Wall Street. And the exact number of times she appeared before the altar for the office of matrimony is worth while setting down.

First of All, the Bridal Gown Received Attention

At the time when the gossip of London was most busy with her name she had been, not four times, but twice wedded, and, though twenty-eight out of the thirty years of her life had been passed in Chicago, she owed it in each case to the respectable agency of death and not to the doubtful intermediation of the divorce court that she had become remarriageable—if one may venture upon that word.

Nothing about a woman whose complexion was once commented upon favorably by his Majesty of England, as she strolled across the Royal Enclosure at Goodwood, can be wholly without interest, yet in all honesty one must confess that the most striking thing about her early days was their dullness. Had the suburbs of Chicago come into their own, and had a historian written down the simple annals of Kenwood and all the regions south of Forty-second Street, some mention must inevitably have crept in of Miss Mary Grainger. At the very least, it may be said that in any account of a dance given by the Hyde Park High School or by the Greek Letter Fraternities of the University of Chicago her name would necessarily have been "among those present." Everybody knew her and, though perhaps she was not quite a belle, everybody liked her. She was always pretty, though never beautiful. She had, from the beginning, an eye of china blue, the loveliest pink cheek, and the softest golden brown hair imaginable. It cannot be claimed for her—she recognized and lamented the fact, though she determined that it should not ruin her life—that she was a Gibson type. She was not tall, and her figure, though always pretty, inevitably reminded one of a dainty and well-nourished little pigeon. Lady Tom Trefford said in after years—and meant it unkindly—that the straight-fronted sort had been invented at the psychological and necessary moment for our heroine. But after all they *were* invented; that is the important point. On the whole, so far as looks went, Mary Grainger was quite well enough equipped.

She was amiable, kind-hearted, and fond of gayety. She was not exceptionally serious nor steadfast in character. Her girlish hesitation as to the form of her own name—this is no sly reference to her matrimonial career—might be evidence. She was born just a little before they began to christen girl babies in America Gladys, Muriel and Hazel. Christened Mary, she was naturally called Mame. But this nickname, unpromising though it might seem to a foreigner, was in the hands of a young woman of that time capable of great variation. Like other Mames of her day and period, Miss Grainger was successively Mame, Mayme, Maimie, Maymie, and finally Maeme. The last proved more than even she herself could bear and—as the fashion had then changed and Kenwood was appreciating to the full such "fragrant and stately old names" as Kate, Martha and Lucinda—she was enabled gracefully to return to Mary. To this ultimately she clung. For when she came to London she dimly divined that even if it were true, as some Americans maintained, that the English had no sense of humor, they would be moved to disrespectful mirth by "Maeme." She contented herself with Mary. It was perhaps as well.

At the age of twenty, Mary Grainger became Mary Southworth. It was a completely happy marriage, made so by Edgar's and Mary's strong though peaceful love. During the first year a baby was born, a girl; but it lived only ten months. Its death was the only sorrow of Edgar's married life. It was the only sorrow of Mary's life that she could never quite forget. At the oddest crises of her later years we shall find her clinging to the shadowy memory of the tiny pink thing that might have grown up to call her mother, and doing kindnesses to others who could never know that they were really done for the little dead Martha.

But Mary, though she grieved tenderly, was not a woman to indulge in morbid sorrow. She had still her husband, her home, and the pleasures of her life in Kenwood. A good position in a wholesale carringe house enabled Edgar Southworth to give his wife a neat little "home," pure colonial, like fifty others in the same street, but more comfortable than most of them. The comfort was, however, due more to Mary's talent than to Edgar's money. It is commonly said that what a house supremely needs is " the touch of a woman's hand," but one might call many a married man to witness that the result of the touch is not always chairs that are easy, nor cushions that are where and what they should be. Mary, besides being tasteful and dainty, was what is called a cozy sort of a woman, and her surrounding was always entitled to share with her that adjective. Years afterward, the Louis-Quinze drawing-room in Curzon Street was noted for containing no chair in which a man (nothing is said about women) would find himself uncomfortable. Mary promptly banished all others. And in Cornell Avenue she triumphed over even the parlor, which was felt by every one to be almost as "homelike" as the sitting-room. Mrs. Southworth was often spoken of as artistic, and the era of Japanese auction sales, setting in about this time, enabled her to justify the adjective at small cost. The house was a delightful setting for such "entertaining" as Mr. and Mrs. Southworth did, and it was at "entertaining" that she shone.

Cornell Avenue was, however, forced to conclude that she was not intellectual. She would not even join the Reading Club, although one winter it went through Motley's Dutch Republic and another studied the English poets before Chaucer. But there was no one who could "jolly up a party" better than she, and no one in the Reading Club who could sing a popular song or do the cakewalk so well. The "Lakeside Progressive Euchre Club" always had a full attendance the times it met with her. When the refreshments were served, the cream on the Vienna coffee was so very frothy that one almost felt as if Mrs. Southworth had lived in that city. The ice cream which she served—once with a hot chocolate sauce and again with walnuts and maple syrup—was so unusual and elegant that every one secretly felt that their hostess had raised not only the gastronomic but the social tone of the club. If Mary had any especial ambitions, and was pleased when the broadening current of Kenwood social life introduced her into a few more spacious homes in Drexel Boulevard, it was because, as she put it, she liked "to see how people did things," so that she could do them herself. Along these simple lines she achieved much in life.

Nothing at that time, however, led one to suppose that her future was to be anything other than pleasantly unhistoric. Then, in the fourth year of their married life, Edgar Southworth died.

Mary sincerely grieved for him, and for two years wore mourning of the prettiest description. But she was young, and it was inevitable that, in a kind of birdlike, twittering way, she should grow cheerful, interested in the present and thoughtful of the future. She might probably have married again had she thought of it, for men usually liked her. Some of the ladies of the Euchre Club talked of Hugh Erskine. He was an old friend of Mary's; indeed in her days at the Hyde Park High School he had been her first love. Whether women ever forget such things or not is a debatable question. At any rate men do, and Hugh did. At least, he was too busy on the Stock Exchange in those years either to remember the past or to turn sentimentally toward the future. He was full of life and spirits, quite capable of loving and winning a woman. But it often happens in America that men have no time to fall in love, no time even to think of doing so. Hugh had been a friend of Edgar's as well, and to him had been left the management of Mary's small business affairs. This was ample explanation of his seeing her the occasional times he did. It was instinct rather than knowledge of any facts which made gossip furtively link his name with Mrs. Southworth's. In the mean time, to put an end to such talk, something considerably more astonishing happened, and Mary became, for the first time, and by no means for the last, an object of real public interest.

The event was led up to by the most usual and the dullest ways. After Edgar's death his widow found that his insurance money and his small savings gave her something to live on—not enough. No one would have called Mary a persistent or a determined woman, yet it is eminently characteristic of her that it never for a moment occurred to her to give up the house in Cornell Avenue, though it was much too expensive for her. She had grown used to its standard of comfortable living, and her mind had no power of turning itself toward anything less pleasant. She solved the problem by taking in two young ladies as boarders, and by securing a position to conduct a cooking-class in the Allerson Institute for the Technical Education of the Masses. Mary had all the domestic virtues; never had either Miss Browne or Miss Stackpole known so comfortable a home, and never, one may confidently assert, had the masses been taught a more simple, "tasty" cuisine. The work was not dull nor was it undignified. The young boarders—one a decorator and the other a music teacher—were quite up to the social level of the Euchre Club, and as for the Institute, it had enlisted in its support some of the best-known ladies and the solidest business men of the South Side. It was at an evening reception, given at the second annual opening of the classes in September, that the instructor in cooking met Henry T. Whiting. It was in St. Stephen's Church in the following March that she became his wife.

Those who habitually speak of our heroine's becoming Mr. Whiting's wife as the greatest event of her life seem to her present chronicler to undervalue the importance of her later transformation into his widow. Yet they were justified in considering it a step. Mr. Henry T. Whiting was sixty years of age. He had been married once and had one child, a daughter aged nineteen. For two years he had been a widower, and had lived alone in the big house on Drexel Boulevard which the late Emmeline Whiting had caused to be built and furnished. Her husband, whose fortune had been made in the well-known "Whiting Line" of grain boats upon the Lakes, was a man of simple tastes, who grouped an enormous number of things which he instinctively distrusted in life under the name of "style," yet felt—as did so many rich men of his time—that to build a large stone house and to furnish it in bad taste was, in a way, a suitable and dignified public manifestation of his position and his bank account. The first Mrs. Whiting had had no social interests; in their place she felt a passion for making crazy-quilts which had far outlived the vogue of that eccentric custom in the community generally. There was always a heavy Sunday dinner at two, and to this came occasional cousins and perhaps a business friend of Mr. Whiting's, bringing his wife. At these functions Henry T., as Emmeline called him, was invariably present, but he scarcely considered them in the nature of a pleasure. Subconsciously, he felt them a kind of penance, which, since he did not go to church, took the place of that pilgrimage. Beyond these Sunday dinners, Mrs. Whiting's "entertaining" consisted of a "tea" given in February,

"There's Only One Thing I Hope You'll Do for Me, Girl," He Said

when some five hundred representative women of Kenwood crowded into the house and ruined their appetite for dinner by feasting on chicken salad and ice cream washed down with tea, coffee and a number of cloying beverages concocted with fruit and syrups. On these occasions business invariably called Mr. Whiting to Milwaukee. He had a healthy mistrust of the appearance of his sex at afternoon parties which he put concisely, if inelegantly, when he said that he "wouldn't be found dead at one of them."

In brief, his home was not a place of public festivity. Nor was it the scene, if one may put it that way, of much private comfort. (Mary recognized this, with her invaluable instinct for what makes men snug, and did wonders even in her first three days.) After his wife's death, though the discomfort never really increased much, it was made, by the added loneliness, to seem to do so. When Mr. Whiting went to the opening of the Allerson Institute, he had already, for over a year, been quietly turning the question of remarriage over in his mind. Mary's own prettiness and sensible, comfortable ways are quite sufficient to explain why his wandering fancies suddenly took definite shape about her comely person. If an additional reason be needed it might perhaps be found in the fact that a beefsteak almost raw, and fried potatoes sogged with grease not quite above reproach, had adorned the heavy mahogany dining-table of the Whiting house that night, and that Mrs. Southworth had been introduced to her new friend as the teacher of cooking.

Considering the matter on yet broader lines, one may find other motives which led Mr. Whiting to think of matrimony. Pauline Whiting, his daughter, aged nineteen, sobbing out her soul to a bosom friend in a bedroom at Miss Hart's school in New York on the evening when the news of her father's engagement had reached her, managed in the tumult of her tears to enunciate an important truth when she wailed: "Oh, if I had been at home it never would have happened!"

Her father's realization of this truth and of all it implied may serve as an additional reason for his remarriage. He had already had experience of his daughter's force of character and the power of her determined will; to borrow from the language of diplomacy, what he wanted was to set up a buffer state. Poor Emmeline had never controlled Pauline, but Mr. Whiting, trusting in the more distant relationship of stepmotherhood, hoped that Mary might.

Pauline's sobs on the Riverside Drive neither improved her own appearance nor the situation in Chicago. She did, indeed, favor her father with a letter, but the epistolary style of youth is rarely sufficiently developed to make writing anything like an adequate substitute for the spoken word. From a distance her father could be all that a parent should be—gentle but firm. Pauline took counsel of necessity, and pledging to silence the bosom friend whom she had bedewed with her first tears of sorrow and rage, announced to the school her delight in the approaching event.

"It will be so nice for me," she exclaimed ecstatically, "to have some one to chaperon me next year."

A fellow-pupil from Philadelphia interjected a doubt as to the existence of the institution of chaperonage in such remote regions as Chicago.

"Chaperons?" queried Pauline, with suspicious sweetness of tone. "Yes, we have them. It's all the same everywhere, Chicago, New York, London, isn't it? Don't you have them in Philadelphia? I always supposed you did, at least society people." Then she again gave way to her girlish enthusiasm over her new stepmother that was to be. "You girls can't imagine how glad I am. They say she is just lovely and too fascinating!"

Pauline had never seen Mrs. Southworth, nor had any one furnished her with an accurate description. But in the recesses of her brain she had ideas on the training of parents, which would apply to step-parents. If the second Mrs. Whiting was not "just lovely and too fascinating" she must be made so, that was all.

Pauline came home a week before the wedding, and Mary, remembering with tender sadness and eyes shining with tears a little child that had died when it was too young to call her "mother," was gently fluttered at the thought of meeting her. But Pauline was unsentimental, though correct in attitude. Mary was chilled.

"Perhaps you had rather not call me mother," she said. Yet, since she was a woman, who shall say precisely in what spirit she meant what she added so gently?—"I'm only nine years older than you, dear"—she looked no more than four—"and I'm afraid I sha'n't succeed in looking the part."

"Oh, you'll do!" said Pauline, with the air of forgiving both her stepmother's youth and any possible innuendo. "I'll call you mother. I need one in my business."

Here it may be noted parenthetically (though with no attempt thus to minimize the importance of the fact) that some stepdaughters as downright plain as Pauline might have found it difficult to forgive stepmothers as downright pretty as Mary. Pauline's lack of looks cannot be insisted on too strongly, it has so much to do with the story of the lives of these two heroines. Alas, that the fiction we so smilingly support abroad that all American girls are pretty must be given up at home! Pauline was plain as are a million other girls. Her figure was flat; her face was a sallow mud color; her features were not even ugly, they seemed merely a random assortment that could scarcely be said to combine into a face of any individuality; her pompadour of stringy, mouse-brown hair arose from a polished though knobby brow in a way that positively irritated one, so exact was its similarity to a million others. Poor Pauline, from whose clear, pale blue eye ambition shone, did indeed need a mother and a pretty one. Yet you could have pardoned her if she had failed to see it clearly.

Pauline may have needed a mother, Mary reflected during the next few days, but evidently she did not need maternal counsel or advice. Unhesitatingly she altered every arrangement that her father and Mrs. Southworth had made for the wedding. First of all, the bridal gown received attention. It was, even Pauline admitted, becoming, but that was not altogether the question. The skirt was slightly gathered at the waist, and they were wearing—so Pauline asserted with all the air of a New Yorker making glad the waste places of the West—nothing but skirts with yokes, the fullness gathered in a band just below the hips. Whether she knew this from constant attendance at the more recent weddings of the Four Hundred, or merely from a study of the Sunday supplements of newspapers, it would be indiscreet in inquire. She announced it convincingly, she seemed almost embittered over it; and Mary, though less vehement, was as ready as her future daughter to force the wretched skirt under or into the yoke (whichever may be the correct expression), if "yokes were being worn." She had always been glad to know how people did things, so that she could do them herself. Pauline, for a schoolgirl, seemed to have what one might call an almost impassioned knowledge of such matters. Mary began to view her with respect, not altogether unmixed with fear. Poor buffer states, how notoriously uncertain and unreliable they are!

The ceremony had been planned for the evening in the quiet of Mrs. Southworth's little home. Pauline insisted upon St. Stephen's and "high noon."

"Why the devil 'high'?" asked her father. Neither Pauline nor the devil could tell him. Apparently no one knows. Yet noon is still "high" wherever fashionable aspirations are concerned.

Whatever other arrangements there were, Miss Whiting changed, and then, and not until then, did she allow the wedding to proceed. Both Mr. Whiting and Mrs. Southworth secretly feared that she might at the last moment attempt to change the bride. But Providence and Pauline allowed noon to be high, as arranged, and Mrs. Southworth to become Mrs. Whiting. Then Pauline withdrew her watchful care and returned to her study of French, English history, and the life of the Four Hundred.

Providence, left behind, in its own strange way judged it wise that Henry T., happy with his little wife and full of kind projects for the future of both women of his family, should be seized with pneumonia and die within three months after the wedding.

He knew a few hours before that the end was coming, and talked of it with a grave, gentle dignity and an unabashed sweetness of nature which at ordinary times he had almost appeared to be at pains to conceal, seeming thus to double Mary's approaching loss. About his wife his feelings were all gratitude, and for the future he frankly wished her all that a young woman might wish for life to bring her. "There's only one thing I hope you'll do for me, girl," he said. "It's hard on Pauline not to have a mother, and I hoped I'd given her one in you. Look after her, won't you? I don't want it to spoil anything for you, but I'd like you to see that she gets her chance in the world, and grows up right."

Mary was kneeling by his bedside and she was crying. Was she, perhaps, thinking of the little Martha who was dead? Her answer to Henry T. was to kiss the hand she held.

"I'll do what I can," she said.

"Pauline is a handful," said her father, and there was a humorous twinkle in his old tired eyes. Even on Mary's tear-stained face there trembled for a moment the half of a smile.

"I'll do what I can," she said again.

"That's right, girl," came from Henry T., and turning a little he sank back as if to try to sleep again. This was perhaps two hours before he died. Mary had not been in love with him in any romantic sense, but she had been grateful for his affection, his simple kindness, and the comfort and position he had given her. She was honestly sad. Yet she did not feel that she was left alone. Indeed, she felt acutely, when the telegram came from New York telling her which train Pauline had caught, that she had been left to her stepdaughter. She sat by the library fire crying gently, and wondering whether Pauline would let her wear the mourning she had ordered. Other questions, broader and more remote, pressed in upon her, but she found no answer to them, and she sighed. She was in God's hands, she felt—and in Pauline's.

II

BEFORE Mrs. Whiting can be presented to the reader in the delightful setting of smart life where later she shines, a little more must really be said of those obscurer, duller, American days. Those, however, who are fitted to appreciate in its full flavor the story of our lady on the ladder will find it all the better for the shadowy background of Kenwood and the Lakeside Euchre Club against which shall move later the figures of the nobility and gentry of England and also that of a Duke of France. The Louis-Quinze armchairs of the Curzon Street drawing-room, covered with old red brocade, will seem the more luxurious if our attention fix itself for a moment on the patent rotker in peacock blue crushed plush in the late Emmeline Whiting's bedroom, where Henry T.'s first wife had sat so often making crazy-quilts, and where now his first widow, if one may put it that way, sat talking to the first wife's daughter.

The funeral was over. If one does not dwell upon the grief of Mrs. and Miss Whiting it is not because that was not real, but because it would only delay the progress of our narrative toward the brighter and merrier days which are its goal. The eyes of both women were still swollen and red with weeping. Yet somehow they already heard again the whirr of life's ceaseless machinery about them, and felt that they must face the future and their plans. Plans were chaotic in the minds of both, but with a sufficient income one may almost face chaos with equanimity. And Mary and Pauline had each been left with about $50,000 a year.

"We'll be in mourning for a year at the very least," said Pauline.

"We can't go anywhere or do any entertaining," added Mary. She could not help thinking how she could have entertained the Lakeside Club; there was space in the reception-room alone for eight tables. And in imagination she had already seen herself giving a nice luncheon party to the ladies of Drexel Boulevard who had called on her since her marriage—ladies, be it said, whose names impressed Cornell Avenue considerably. Upon this modestly ambitious revery her stepdaughter's voice broke contemptuously:

"Entertaining?" she said. "Much entertaining we could do here, anyhow!"

"Oh, I don't know," replied Mary deprecatingly. "It's a lovely house, I think. Of course, there are lots of things I want to do to it. I think it seems"—she hesitated, not wishing to wound Pauline—"sort of stiff, don't you?"

"The only thing I want to do to the house," said the younger woman, "is to sell it. I don't see why they wouldn't build it on the North Side. I was only eleven when they did it, but I knew then it wasn't the thing to do. They might just about as well have stayed on the West Side where we were." (This, for the benefit of non-Chicagoans, is how you swing around the social compass, West, South, North—the East is the Lake where some fall in.) "Of course, papa didn't like society and mamma never went anywhere. They were perfectly contented down here. But I don't think it's quite fair on me."

"It's About that House at Lake Forest"

"The North Side's nice, but they say it's ever so much dirtier there than here. Window curtains only stay clean about a week," said Mary soothingly.

"They can be washed, though," commented Pauline. She looked at her stepmother for a moment. She was glad that Drexel Boulevard seemed not only an advance from Cornell Avenue, but satisfactory in itself, glad that Mary should feel that alliance with the Whitings had lifted her to the high peaks of fashion, and that she should continue to burn this incense so grateful to her stepdaughter's nostrils. Brave though she was, Pauline could not bring herself to paint for her stepmother a picture of things as they were. Had she done so, Mary would have felt everything crumbling around her, the edifice of Kenwood and the regions south of Forty-second Street as she had known them all her life, while beyond the wreckage and through the murk and gloom of the city's smoke she would have seen the vision of a land of promise, the Lake Shore Drive and its long, stately line of the residences of Chicago's very best people. But Pauline could not humble herself, she could not let Mary see her as an outsider crying out with fierce passion for admission to these new and charmed circles.

"Of course, when our mourning is over, we shall be going out almost entirely with the North Side set," she said.

And Mary, trustful and smiling, made this naïve comment:

"That will be nice," she said. "And now I've got a plan. How would you like to go abroad this year, while we're in mourning? I've always wanted to go; even those girls who boarded with me had been. I felt almost ashamed. You'll want a lot of new clothes in colors when you come out. And I've always been crazy to see Paris. We'll be as well dressed as any of them, you'll see, Pauline."

Pauline, with unabated pride, made but one comment. "I should hope so," in cold tones. She did not realize that at that very moment Mary wore her costume with a Parisian air that her stepdaughter would never attain.

. . . . . .

Readers must bear it in patience that nothing can make the history of the first trip abroad really startling. Perhaps it may help them a little to hold in their mind the image of the chrysalis, to remember that dull but necessary period which precedes every butterfly existence—and we promise to deal in due time with two butterflies of fashion. Working in the obscurity of their mourning garments and of their limited acquaintance, the Whiting ladies effected certain transformations. They were no more "in society" than when they left Chicago, yet they gradually took on the air of being. They had no friends beyond the chance companions of travel, mostly compatriots, but they fed each morning upon the title-starred columns of the Paris edition of the New York Herald, and they felt that in a vague way they had their part in this splendid European life. And as contrasted with existence in Kenwood and the regions south of Forty-second Street it is something to say that Lady Tom Trefford was lunching at the Carlton the other day when you were there; that the Comtesse du Mezidon and her brother, the Duc d'Artannes, drank tea at the table next yours at Colombin's, or that the Grand Duke Alexis and Prince Kitzimisz were at Cannes when you were—even if you don't know a single one of them. At this period, neither Mary nor Pauline actually thought of personal acquaintances with any of these people, nor hoped for it. Their minds were fixed on Chicago and their return. Yet they took an enormous pleasure in thus "hanging about" outside the gates of European fashion. At least Mary could see "how people did things," and as usual "do them herself."

For example, she saw how they dressed in Paris; she never again dressed quite as they do in Kenwood. In London she heard how English people, as distinguished from American actors imitating them, do speak; never again did she sound her r's and a's quite as they did in the Lakeside Euchre Club. She had learned to take a cold tub every morning, and to talk about it in public. Really, one might have thought her in society if one hadn't known. But Chicago knew, though Mary herself did not.

Pauline, dressed in the soft gray and mauve of half mourning (Paris had taught even Pauline something of how to dress, though nothing ever could teach her how not to be plain), turned her eyes at length to the city by Lake Michigan. It was all very well for her stepmother to be happy in the luxurious obscurity of their life abroad. Until her native town should recognize her, her cup was bitter at the dregs.

"We're in Chicago so little," she was always saying. "I was at school and since then we've been over here. I really scarcely feel at home there and we're quite out of touch; in fact, we scarcely know people there." She had learned to say it lightly, yet there were moments when she felt that she should scream aloud if any one ever again asked her if she knew this society woman or suggested that she must be acquainted with that cotillon leader. And inquiries about Miss Alma Lester almost drove her mad.

It happened that this young woman, also of Chicago extraction, was abroad the same year as the Whitings.

(Continued on Page 50)

The Triumphs of Eugène Valmont

By Robert Barr

Lady Alicia's Emeralds

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MANY Englishmen, if you speak to them of me, indulge themselves in a detraction which I hope they will not mind my saying is not graced by that delicacy of innuendo with which some of my countrymen attempt to diminish whatever merit I may possess. Mr. Spenser Hale, of Scotland Yard, whose lack of imagination I have so often endeavored to amend—alas, without perceptible success!—was good enough to say, after I had begun these reminiscences, which he read with affected scorn, that I was wise in setting down my successes, because the life of Methuselah himself would not be long enough to chronicle my failures, and the man to whom this was said replied that it was only my artfulness, a word of which these people are very fond; that I intended to use my successes as bait, issue a small pamphlet filled with them, and then record my failures in a thousand volumes, after the plan of a Chinese encyclopædia, and sell these to the public on the installment plan.

Ah, well, it is not for me to pass comment on such observations! Every profession has its little jealousies, and why should the coterie of detection be exempt? I hope I may never be led to follow an example so deleterious, and thus be tempted to express my contempt for the stupidity with which the official detective system of England is imbued. I have had my failures, of course. Have I pretended to be otherwise than human? But what has been the cause of these failures? They have arisen through the conservatism of the English. When there is a mystery to be solved, the average Englishman almost invariably places it in the hands of the regular police. When these good people are utterly baffled; when their big boots have crushed out all evidence that the grounds may have had to offer to a discerning mind; when their clumsy hands have obliterated the clews which are everywhere around them, I am at last called in, and if I fail, they say:

"What could you expect? He is a Frenchman!"

This was exactly what happened in the case of Lady Alicia's emeralds. For two months the regular police were not only befogged, but they blatantly sounded the alarm to every thief in Europe. All the pawnbrokers' shops of Great Britain were ransacked, as if the robber of so valuable a collection would be foolish enough to take it to a pawnbroker! Of course, the police say that they thought the thief would dismantle the cluster, and sell the gems separately. But the necklace of emeralds, possessing as it did an historical value which is probably in excess of its intrinsic worth—what more natural than that the holder of it should open negotiations with its rightful owner, and thus make more money by quietly restoring it than by its dismemberment and sale piecemeal? But such a fuss was kicked up, such a furore created, that it was no wonder the receiver of the goods lay low, and said nothing. In vain were all ports giving access to the Continent watched; in vain were the police of France, Belgium and Holland warned to look out for this treasure. Two valuable months were lost, and then the Marquis of Blair sent for me. I maintain that the case was hopeless at the moment I took it up.

It may be asked why the Marquis of Blair allowed the regular police to blunder along for two precious months, but any one who is acquainted with that nobleman will not wonder that he clung so long to a forlorn hope. Very few members of the House of Peers are richer than Lord Blair, and still fewer more penurious. He maintained that as he paid his taxes he was entitled to protection from theft; that it was the duty of the Government to restore the gems, and if it could not do that, to make compensation for them. This theory is not acceptable in the English courts, and while Scotland Yard did all it could during those two months, what but failure could have been expected from its limited mental equipment?

When I arrived at the Manor of Blair, as his lordship's very ugly and somewhat modern mansion house is termed, I was instantly admitted to his presence. I had been summoned from London by a letter in his lordship's own hand, on which postage was not paid. It was late in the afternoon when I arrived, and our first conference was what might be termed futile. It was taken up entirely with haggling about terms: the Marquis endeavoring to beat down the price of my services to a sum so insignificant that it would barely have paid my expenses from London to Blair and back. Such bargaining is intensely distasteful to me.

When the Marquis found all his offers declined with a politeness which left him no opening for anger on his part, he endeavored to induce me to take up the case on a commission contingent upon my recovery of the gems, and as I declined this for the twentieth time, darkness came on, and the gong rang for dinner.

The Front Door was Unlocked, and We Walked into the Church in Silence

I dined alone in a *salle à manger* which appeared to be set apart for those calling at the mansion on business, and the meagreness of the fare strengthened my determination to return to London as early as possible next morning. When the repast was finished, the dignified serving-man said gravely to me:

"The Lady Alicia asks if you will be good enough to give her a few moments in the drawing-room, sir."

I followed the man to the drawing-room, and found the young lady seated at the piano, on which she was strumming idly and absent-mindedly, but with a touch, nevertheless, that indicated advanced excellence in the art of music. She was not dressed as one who had just risen from the dining-table, but was somewhat primly and commonly attired, looking more like a cottager's daughter than a member of a great county family. Her head was small, and crowned with a mass of jet-black hair. My first impression on entering the large, rather dimly-lighted room, was unfavorable, but that vanished instantly under the charm of a manner so graceful and vivacious that in a moment I seemed to be standing in a brilliant Parisian *salon* rather than in the sombre drawing-room of an English country house. Every poise of her dainty head; every gesture of those small, perfect hands; every modulated tone of the voice, whether sparkling with laughter, or caressing in confidential speech, reminded me of the *grandes dames* of my own land. It was strange to find this perfect human flower amidst the gloomy ugliness of a great square house built in the time of the Georges, but I remembered now that the Blairs are the English equivalent of the De Bellairs of France, from which family sprang the fascinating Marquise de Bellairs, who adorned the Court of Louis XIV. Here, advancing toward me, was the very reincarnation of the lovely Marquise, who gave lustre to this dull world nearly three hundred years ago. Ah, after all, what are the English but a conquered race! I often forget this, and I trust I never remind them of it, but it enables one to forgive them much. A vivid twentieth-century Marquise was Lady Alicia in all except attire. What a dream some of our Parisian dress artists could have made of her, and here she was immured in this dull English house, in the high-necked costume of a laborer's wife.

"Welcome, Monsieur Valmont!" she cried, in French of almost faultless intonation. "I am *so* glad you have arrived!" and here she greeted me as if I were an old friend of the family. There was nothing of condescension in her manner—no display of her own affability, at the same time teaching me my place and the difference in our stations of life. I can stand the rudeness of the nobility, but I detest their condescension. No; Lady Alicia was a true De Bellairs, and in my confusion, bending over her slender hand, I said:

"Madame la Marquise, it is my privilege to extend to you my most respectful salutations."

She laughed at this, quietly, with the melting laugh of the nightingale.

"Monsieur, you mistake my title. Although my uncle is a Marquis, I am but Lady Alicia."

"Your pardon, my lady. For the moment I was back in that scintillating Court which surrounded Louis le Grand."

"How flatteringly you introduce yourself, monsieur! In the gallery upstairs there is a painting of the Marquise de Bellairs, and when I show it to you to-morrow you will then understand how you have pleased a vain woman by your reference to that beautiful lady. But I must not talk in this frivolous strain, monsieur. There is serious business to be considered, and I assure you I looked forward to your coming, monsieur, with the eagerness of sister Anne on the tower of Bluebeard."

I fear my expression as I bowed to her must have betrayed my gratification at hearing these words so confidentially uttered from lips so sweet, while the glance of her lovely eyes was even more eloquent than her words. Instantly I felt ashamed of my chaffering over terms with her uncle: instantly I forgot my resolution to depart on the morrow: instantly I resolved to be of what assistance I could to this dainty lady. Alas, the heart of Valmont is to-day as unprotected against the artillery of inspiring eyes as ever it was in his extreme youth!

"This house," she continued vivaciously," has been practically in a state of siege for two months. I could take none of my usual walks in the gardens, on the lawns or through the park without some clumsy policeman in uniform crashing his way through the bushes, or some detective in plain clothes accosting and questioning me under the pretense that he was a stranger who had lost his way. The lack of all subtlety in our police is something deplorable. I am sure the real criminal might have passed through their hands a dozen times unmolested, while our poor innocent servants, and the strangers within our gates, are made to feel that the stern eye of the law is upon them night and day."

The face of the young lady was an entrancing picture of animated indignation as she gave utterance to this truism which her countrymen are so slow to appreciate. I experienced a glow of satisfaction.

"Yes," she went on, "they sent down from London an army of stupid men, who have kept our household in a state of abject terror for eight long weeks; and where are the emeralds?"

As she suddenly asked this question, with the most Parisian of accents, with a little outward spreading of the hands, a flash of the eye, and a toss of the head, the united effect was something indescribable through the limitations of the language I am compelled to use.

"Well, monsieur, your arrival has put to flight this tiresome brigade, if, indeed, the word 'flight' is not too airy a term to use toward a company so elephantine, and, I assure you, a sigh of relief has gone up from the whole household, with the exception of my uncle, and I told him at dinner to-night: 'If Monsieur Valmont had been induced to take an interest in the case at first, the jewels would have been in my possession long before to-night.'"

"Ah, my lady," I protested, "I fear you overrate my poor ability. Yet it is quite true that if I had been called in on the night of the robbery my chances of success would have been infinitely greater than they are now."

"Monsieur," she cried, clasping her hands over her knees and leaning toward me, hypnotizing me with those starry eyes—"Monsieur, I am perfectly confident that, before a week is past, you will restore the necklace, if such restoration is possible. I have said so from the first. Now, am I right in my conjecture, monsieur, that you come here

Editor's Note—This is the sixth and last of a series of stories by Mr. Barr, each complete in itself, but all dealing with the adventures of the detective, Eugène Valmont.

alone, that you bring with you no train of followers and assistants?"

"That is as you have stated it, my lady."

"I was sure of it. It is to be a contest of trained mentality in opposition to our two months' experience of brute force."

Never before had I felt such ambition to succeed, and a determination not to disappoint took full possession of me. Appreciation is a needed stimulant, and here it was offered to me in its most fascinating form. Ah, Valmont, Valmont, will you never grow old! I am sure that at that moment, if I had been eighty, the same thrill of enthusiasm would have tingled at my fingers' ends. Leave the Manor of Blair in the morning? Not for the Bank of France!

"Has my uncle acquainted you with particulars of the robbery?"

"No, madame; we were talking of other things."

The lady leaned back in her low chair, partially closed her eyes, and breathed a deep sigh.

"I can well imagine the subject of your conversation," she said at last. "The Marquis of Blair was endeavoring to impose usurer's terms upon you, while you, nobly scorning such mercenary considerations, had perhaps resolved to leave us at the earliest opportunity."

"I assure you, my lady, that, if any such conclusion had been arrived at on my part, it vanished the moment I was privileged to set foot in this drawing-room."

"It is kind of you to say that, monsieur, but you must not allow your conversation with my uncle to prejudice you against him. He is an old man now, and, of course, has his fancies. You would think him mercenary, perhaps, and so he is, but then so, too, am I. Oh, yes, I am, monsieur: frightfully mercenary! To be mercenary, I believe, means to be fond of money. No one is fonder of money than I, except, perhaps, my uncle; but you see, monsieur, we occupy the two extremes. He is fond of money to hoard it: I am fond of money to spend it. I am fond of money for the things it will buy. I should like to scatter largess as did my fair ancestress in France. I should love a manor house in the country, and a mansion in Mayfair. I could wish to make every one around me happy if the expenditure of money would do it."

"That is a form of money-love, Lady Alicia, that will find a multitude of admirers."

The girl shook her head, and laughed merrily.

"I should dislike to forfeit your esteem, Monsieur Valmont, and therefore I shall not reveal the depth of my cupidity. You will learn that probably from my uncle, and then you will understand my extreme anxiety for the recovery of these jewels."

"Are they very valuable?"

"Oh, yes! The necklace consists of twenty stones, no one of which weighs less than an ounce. Altogether, I believe, they amount to 2400 or 2500 carats, and their intrinsic value is twenty pounds a carat at least. So you see that means nearly £50,000; yet even this sum is trivial compared with what it involves. There is something like a million at stake, together with my coveted manor house in the country and my equally coveted mansion in Mayfair. All this is within my grasp if I can but recover the emeralds."

The girl blushed as she noticed how intently I regarded her while she evolved this mystery. I thought there was a trace of embarrassment in her laugh when she said:

"Oh, what will you think of me when you understand the situation? Pray, pray do not judge me harshly! I assure you the position I aim at will be used for the good of others as well as for my own pleasure. If my uncle does not make a confidant of you I must take my courage in both hands and give you all the particulars, but not to-night. Of course, if one is to unravel such a snarl as that in which we find ourselves, he must be made aware of every particular, must he not?"

"Certainly, my lady."

"Very well, Monsieur Valmont, I shall supply any deficiencies that occur in my uncle's conversation with you. There is one point on which I should like to warn you. Both my uncle and the police have made up their minds that a certain young man is the culprit. The police found various clews which apparently led in his direction, but they were unable to gather enough to justify his arrest. At first I could have sworn he had nothing whatever to do with the matter, but lately I am not so sure. All I ask of you until we have another opportunity of consulting together is to preserve an open mind, and do not let my uncle prejudice you against him."

"What is the name of this young man?"

"He is the Honorable John Haddon."

"The Honorable? Is he a person who would do so dishonorable an action?"

The young lady shook her head.

"I am almost sure he would not, and yet one never can tell. I think at the present moment there are one or two noble lords in prison, but their crimes have not been mere vulgar housebreaking."

"Am I to infer, Lady Alicia, that you are in possession of certain facts not known either to your uncle or the police?"

"Yes."

"Pardon me, but do these facts tend to incriminate the young man?"

Again the young lady leaned back in her chair and gazed past me, a wrinkle of perplexity on her fair brow. Then she said very slowly:

"You will understand, Monsieur Valmont, how loth I am to speak against one who was formerly a friend. If he had been content to remain a friend I am sure this incident, which has caused us all such worry and trouble, would never have happened. I do not wish to dwell on what my uncle will tell you was a very unpleasant episode, but the Honorable John Haddon is a poor man, and it is quite out of the question for one brought up as I have been to marry into poverty. He was very headstrong and reckless about the matter, and involved my uncle in a bitter quarrel while discussing it, much to my chagrin and disappointment. It is as necessary for him to marry wealth as it is for me to make a good match, but he could not be brought to see that. Oh, he is not at all a sensible young man, and all my friendship for him has ceased! Yet I should dislike very much to take any action that would harm him, so I have spoken to no one but you about the evidence that is in my hands, and this you must treat as entirely confidential, giving no hint to my uncle, who is already bitter enough against Mr. Haddon."

"Does it convince you that he stole the necklace?"

"No; I do not believe yet that he actually stole it, but I am persuaded that he was accessory after the fact—is that the legal term? Now, Monsieur Valmont, we will say no more to-night. If I talk any longer about this crisis I shall not sleep, and I wish, with your help, to attack the situation with a very clear mind to-morrow."

When I retired to my room I found that I, too, could not sleep, although I also needed a clear mind to face the problem of to-morrow. It is difficult for me to describe accurately the effect this interview had upon my mind, but, to use a bodily simile, I may say that it seemed as if I had indulged too freely in a subtle champagne which appeared exceedingly excellent at first, but from which the exhilaration had now departed.

No man could have been more completely under a spell than I was when Lady Alicia's eyes first spoke to me more than her lips revealed, but although I had challenged her right to the title "mercenary" when she applied it to herself, I could not but confess that her nonchalant recital regarding the friend who desired to be the lover jarred upon me. I found my sympathy extending itself to that unknown young man on whom it appeared the shadow of suspicion already rested. I was confident that if he had actually taken the emeralds it was not at all from motives of cupidity. Indeed, that was practically shown by the fact that Scotland Yard had been unable to trace the jewels, which, at least, they might have done if the necklace had been sold either as a whole or dismembered. Of course, an emerald weighing an ounce is by no means unusual. The Hope emerald, for example, weighs six ounces, and the gem owned by the Duke of Devonshire measures two inches and a quarter through its greatest diameter. Nevertheless, such a constellation as the Blair emeralds was not to be disposed of very easily, and I surmised no attempt had been made either to sell them or to raise money upon them.

Now that I had removed myself from the glamour of her presence, I began to suspect that the young lady, after all, although undoubtedly possessing the brilliancy of her jewels, retained also something of their hardness. There had been no expression of sympathy for the discarded friend: it was too evident, recalling what had latterly passed between us, that the young woman's sole desire, and a perfectly natural desire, was to recover her missing treasure. There was something behind all this which I could not comprehend, and I resolved in the morning to question the Marquis of Blair as shrewdly as he cared to allow. Failing him, I should cross-question the niece in a somewhat dryer light than that which had enshrouded me during this interesting evening. I care not who knows it, but I have been befooled more than once by a woman, and I determined that in clear daylight I should resist the hypnotizing influence of those glorious eyes. *Mon Dieu! Mon Dieu!*—How easy it is for me to make good resolutions when I am far from temptation!

It was ten o'clock next morning when I was admitted to the study of the aged bachelor Marquis of Blair. His keen eyes looked through and through me as I seated myself before him.

"Well!" he said shortly.

"My lord," I began deliberately, "I know nothing more of this case than was furnished by the accounts I have read in the newspapers. Two months have elapsed since the robbery. Every day that passed made the detection of the criminal more difficult. I do not wish to waste either my time or your money on a forlorn hope. If, therefore, you will be good enough to place me in possession of the facts known to you I shall tell you at once whether or not I can take up the case."

"Do you wish the name of the criminal?" asked his lordship.

"Do you know his name?" I asked in return.

"Yes, his name is John Haddon."

"Did you give that name to the police?"

"Yes."

"Why didn't they arrest him?"

"Because the evidence against him is so small, and the improbability of his having committed the crime is so great."

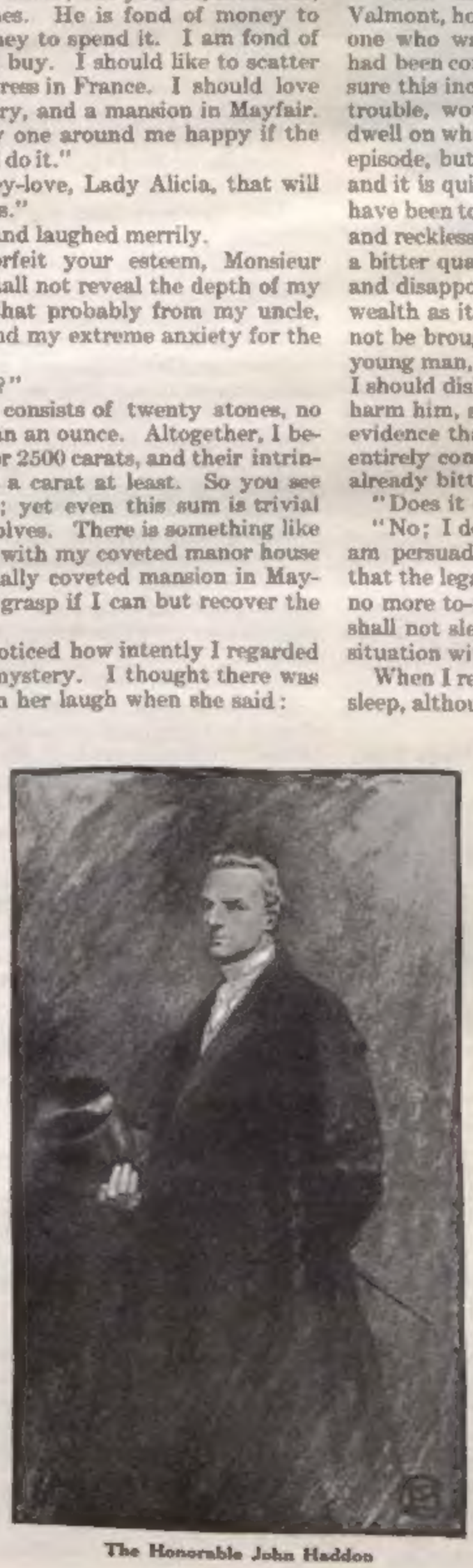
"What is the evidence against him?"

His lordship spoke with the dry deliberation of an aged solicitor.

"The robbery was committed on the night of October 5. All day there had been a heavy rain, and the grounds were wet. For reasons into which I do not care to go, John Haddon was familiar with this house and with our grounds. He was well known to my servants, and, unfortunately, popular with them, for he is an open-handed spendthrift. The estate of his elder brother, Lord Steffenham, adjoins my own to the west, and Lord Steffenham's house is three miles from where we sit. On the night of the fifth a ball was given in the mansion of Lord Steffenham, to which, of course, my niece and myself were invited, and which invitation we accepted. I have no quarrel with the elder brother. It was known to John Haddon that my niece intended to wear her necklace of emeralds.

"The robbery occurred at a time when most crimes of that nature are committed in country houses, namely, while we were at dinner, an hour during which the servants are almost invariably in the lower part of the house. In October the days are getting short. The night was exceptionally dark, for, although the rain had ceased, not a star was visible. The thief placed a ladder against the sill of one of the upper windows, opened it, and came in. He must have been perfectly familiar with the house, for there are evidences that he went directly to the boudoir where the jewel-case had been carelessly left on my niece's

Jonas Carter



The Honorable John Haddon

dressing-table when she came down to dinner. It had been taken from the strong-room about an hour before. The box was locked, but, of course, that made no difference. The thief wrenched the lid off, breaking the lock, stole the necklace, and escaped by the way he came."

"Did he leave the window open and the ladder in place?"

"Yes."

"Doesn't that strike you as very extraordinary?"

"No. I do not assert that he is a professional burglar, who would take all the precautions against the discovery that might have been expected from one of the craft. Indeed, the man's carelessness in going straight across the country to his brother's house, and leaving footsteps in the soft earth, easily traceable almost to the very boundary fence, shows he is incapable of any serious thought."

"Is John Haddon rich?"

"He hasn't a penny."

"Did you go to the ball that night?"

"Yes; I had promised to go."

"Did John Haddon appear there?"

"Yes, but he appeared late. He should have been there at the opening, and his brother was greatly annoyed. When he did come he acted in a wild and reckless manner, which gave the guests an impression that he had been drinking. Both my niece and myself were disgusted with his actions."

"Do you think your niece suspects him?"

"She certainly did not at first, and was indignant when I told her, coming home from the ball, that her jewels were undoubtedly at Steffenham House, even though they were not around her neck; but latterly I think her opinion has changed."

"To go back a moment: Did any of your servants see Haddon prowling about the place?"

"They all say they didn't, but I myself saw him, just before dusk, coming across the fields toward this house, and next morning we found the same footprints both going and coming. It seems to me the circumstantial evidence is rather strong."

"It's a pity no one but yourself saw him. What more evidence are the authorities waiting for?"

"They are waiting until he attempts to dispose of the jewels."

"You think, then, he has not done so up to date?"

"I think he will never do so."

"Then why did he steal them?"

"To prevent the marriage of my niece with Jonas Carter, of Sheffield, to whom she is betrothed. They were to be married early in the New Year."

"My lord, you amaze me. If Mr. Carter and Lady Alicia are engaged why should the theft of the jewels interfere with the ceremony?"

"Mr. Jonas Carter is a most estimable man, who, however, does not move in our sphere of life. He is connected with the steel or cutlery industry, and is a man of great wealth, rising upward of a million, with a large estate in Derbyshire, and a house fronting Hyde Park in London. He is a very strict business man, and both my niece and myself agree that he is also an eligible man. I myself am rather strict in matters of business, and I must admit that Mr. Carter showed a very generous spirit in arranging the preliminaries of the engagement with me. When Alicia's father died he had run through all the money he himself possessed or could borrow from his friends. Although a man of noble birth, I never liked him. He was married to my only sister. The Blair emeralds, as perhaps you are aware, descend down the female line. They had, therefore, come to my niece from her mother. My poor sister had long been disillusioned before death released her from the titled scamp she had married, and she very wisely placed the emeralds in my custody to be held in trust for her daughter. They constitute my niece's only fortune, and would produce, if offered in London to-day, probably seventy-five or a hundred thousand pounds, although actually they are not worth so much. Mr. Jonas Carter very amiably consented to receive my niece with a dowry of only £50,000, and that money I offered to advance if I was allowed to retain the jewels as security. This was arranged between Mr. Carter and myself."

"But surely Mr. Carter does not refuse to carry out his engagement because the jewels have been stolen?"

"He does. Why should he not?"

"Then surely you will advance the £50,000 necessary?"

"I will not. Why should I?"

"Well, it seems to me," said I with a slight laugh, "that the young man has very definitely checkmated both of you."

"He has, until I shall have laid him by the heels, which I am determined to do if he were the brother of twenty Lord Steffenhams."

"Please answer one more question. Are you determined to put the young man in prison, or would you be content with the return of the emeralds intact?"

"Of course, I should prefer to put him in prison and get the emeralds, too, but if there's no choice in the matter I must content myself with the necklace."

"Very well, my lord, I will undertake the case."

This conference had detained us in the study till after eleven, and then, as it was a clear, crisp December morning, I went out through the gardens into the park, that I might walk along the well-kept private road and meditate upon my course of action, or rather, think over what had been said, because I could not map my route until I had heard the secret which Lady Alicia had promised to impart. As at present instructed, it seemed to me that it was the best way to go direct to the young man, show him as effectively as I could the danger in which he stood, and, if possible, persuade him to give up the necklace to me. As I strolled along under the grand old leafless trees, I suddenly heard my name called impulsively two or three times, and, turning around, saw the Lady Alicia running toward me.

I Found the Young Lady Seated at the Piano

Her cheeks were bright with Nature's rouge, and her eyes sparkled more dazzlingly than any emerald that ever tempted man to wickedness.

"Oh, Monsieur Valmont, I had been waiting for you, and you escaped me! Have you seen uncle?"

"Yes, I have been with him since ten o'clock."

"Well?"

"Your ladyship, that is exactly the word with which he greeted me."

"Ah, you see an additional likeness between my uncle and myself this morning, then? Has he told you about Mr. Carter?"

"Yes."

"Then you understand how important it is that I should regain possession of my property?"

"Yes," I said with a sigh, "the house near Hyde Park, and the great estate in Derbyshire."

She clapped her hands with glee, eyes and feet dancing in unison, as she capered along gayly beside me, a sort of skippety-hop, skippety-hop sideways, keeping pace with my more stately step, as if she were a little girl of six instead of a young woman of twenty.

"Not only that!" she cried, "but £1,000,000 to spend! Oh, Monsieur Valmont, you know Paris, and yet you do not seem to comprehend what that plethora of money means!"

"Well, madame, I have seen Paris, and I have seen a good deal of the world, but I am not so sure you will have the million to spend."

"What?" she cried, stopping short, that little wrinkle which betokened temper appearing on her brow. "Do you think we won't get the emeralds, then?"

"Oh, I am sure we will get the emeralds! I, Valmont, pledge you my word. But if Mr. Jonas Carter, before marriage, calls a halt upon the ceremony until your uncle places £50,000 upon the table, I confess I am very pessimistic about your obtaining control of the million afterward."

All her vivacity instantaneously returned.

"Poon!" she cried, dancing round in front of me, and standing there directly in my path, so that I came to a halt. "Pooh!" she repeated, snapping her fingers, with an inimitable gesture of that lovely hand, "Monsieur Valmont, I am disappointed in you. You are not nearly so nice as you were last evening. It is very uncomplimentary in you to intimate that when once I am married to Mr. Jonas I shall not wheedle from him all the money I want. Do not rest your eyes on the ground: look at me and answer!"

I looked up at her, and could not forbear laughing. The witchery of the wood was in that girl, yes, and a perceptible trace of the Gallic devil flickered in those enchanting eyes of hers. I could not help myself.

"Ah, Madame la Marquise de Bellairs, how jauntily you would scatter despair in that susceptible Court of Louis!"

"Ah, Monsieur Eugène de Valmont," she cried, mimicking my tones, and imitating my manner with an exactitude that amazed me, "you are now my dear De Valmont of last night. I dreamed of you—I assure you I did—and now to find you in the morning, oh, so changed!" and she clasped her little hands and drooped her head, and her voice sank into a cadence of melancholy which seemed so genuine that the mocking ripple of a laugh immediately following was almost a shock to me. Where had this creature of the dull English countryside learned all such *frou-frou* of gesture and tone?

"Have you ever seen Sarah Bernhardt?" I asked.

Now the average Englishwoman would have inquired the genesis of so inconsequent a question, but Lady Alicia followed the trend of my thought, and answered at once, as if my query had been quite expected:

"*Mais non*, monsieur. Sarah the Divine! Ah, she comes with my million a year, and the house of Hyde Park! No, the only inhabitant of my real world whom I have yet seen is Monsieur Valmont, and he, alas, I find so changeable. But now, adieu frivolity; we must be serious." And she walked sedately by my side.

"Do you know where you are going, monsieur? You are going to church. Oh, do not look frightened—not to a service! I am decorating the church with holly, and you shall help me and get thorns in your poor fingers."

The private road, which up to this time had passed through a forest, now reached a secluded glade in which stood a very small, but exquisite, church, evidently centuries older than the mansion we had left. Beyond it were gray stone ruins which Lady Alicia pointed out to me as remnants of the original château that had been built in the reign of the second Henry. The church, it was thought, formed the private chapel to this castle, and it had been kept in repair by the various lords of the manor.

"Now harken to the power of the poor, and learn how they may flout the proud Marquis!" cried Lady Alicia gleefully. "The poorest man in England may walk along this private road on Sunday to the church, and the proud Marquis is powerless to prevent him. Of course, if the poor man prolongs his walk, then he is in danger from the law of trespass. On week-days, however, this is the most secluded spot on the estate, and I regret to say that my lordly uncle does not trouble it even on Sundays. I fear we are a degenerate race, Monsieur Valmont, for doubtless a fighting and deeply religious ancestor of mine built this church, and to think that, when the useful masons cemented these stones together, Madame la Marquise de Bellairs or Lady Alicia were alike unthought of, and though three hundred years divide them seem, as one might say, contemporaries! Oh, Monsieur Valmont, what is the use of worrying about emeralds or anything else? As I look at this beautiful old church, even the house of Hyde Park appears as naught!" And, to my amazement, the eyes that Lady Alicia turned upon me were wet.

The front door was unlocked, and we walked into the church in silence. Around the pillars holly and ivy were twined. Great armfuls of the shrub were flung here and there along the wall in heaps, and a stepladder stood in one of the aisles, showing that the decoration of the edifice was not yet complete. A subdued melancholy had settled down on my erstwhile vivacious companion, the inevitable reaction so characteristic of the artistic temperament, augmented, doubtless, by the solemnity of the place, around whose walls in brass and marble were sculptured memorials of her ancient race.

"You promised," I said at last, "to tell me how you came to suspect ——"

"Not here, not here!" she whispered. Then, rising from the pew in which she had seated herself, she said: "Let us go; I am in no mood for working this morning. I shall finish the decoration in the afternoon."

We came out into the cool and brilliant sunlight again, and, as we turned homeward, her spirits immediately began to rise.

"I am anxious to know," I persisted, "why you came to suspect a man whom at first you believed innocent."

"I am not sure but I believe him innocent now, although I am forced to the conclusion that he knows where the treasure is."

"What forces you to that conclusion, my lady?"

"A letter I received from himself, in which he makes a proposal so extraordinary that I am almost disinclined to accede to it, even though it leads to the discovery of my necklace. However, I am determined to leave no means untried if I receive the support of my friend Monsieur Valmont."

"My lady," said I with a bow, "it is yours to command, mine but to obey. What were the contents of the letter?"

(Concluded on Page 23)

Seeking Investment: One Kind of Success

By George Carling

A Struggle with the Standard Wool Company and a Little War for the Heart and Hand of Elfie

I Only Know That They Were the Most Intensely Interested Crowd I'd Ever Seen

I DO NOT claim to be a hustler. Early in my career I discovered that such men rush around the rim in their work, although the ground they really cover may usually be estimated as one spoke of the wheel. I prefer to stay quietly by the hub, with an eye on all the spokes. Be that as it may, I found that after three years of earnest work with the Seringford Power Company I had more than doubled the million with which I had started.

I had just placed in my deposit box, at the Seringford National Bank—of which I was now president—a considerable block of Power Company's stock, which I had just bought at seventy-eight, to replace some I had sold two months before at ninety-seven, when a visitor was ushered into my room. I had, during the past five years, come in contact with many men of various occupations, but the man who now entered instantly impressed me as no other had ever done. He was of medium height but massive build; his features were strong and full of character, and his face deeply furrowed with lines. His appearance was dignified and imposing, and the words of Scripture came to my mind: "He shall stand before kings; he shall not stand before mean men."

"Mr. Dubble?" he asked in a strong but pleasant voice.

I bowed, expecting him to state his own name, but he went straight on:

"You are the owner of some oak timber lands in this State, I am informed."

"Yes," I replied, "I have a small tract, I believe."

"You are modest, Mr. Dubble! Most men would call two thousand acres a large tract. Do you wish to sell?"

"I bought that land for speculation, Mr.—er——"

"Strang is my name. John Strang, of New York."

It was an unknown name to me, and I continued: "So that, of course, when a good opportunity offers to close at a profit, I am ready."

"What do you ask, Mr. Dubble?"

"Two hundred dollars per acre," I said, at a venture.

He laughed good-humoredly. "I was mistaken about your modesty, Mr. Dubble, but I can credit you with foresight in no small degree."

I was puzzled at this remark, and no doubt he observed it, for he continued:

"You see, as evidently but few men do see, that oak timber will be better property in the future than either in the past or present. Now, I am prepared to buy the land, and pay a good price for it—not two hundred, of course, but a good price. I have first a proposition to make; if you accept you'll probably not want to sell. If you decline, we—that is, I—can no doubt come to terms with you for the purchase."

He went on, without waiting for my reply: "Do you care to go into a combination to acquire possession of the whole of the great oak belt of this State—which means, practically, the control of the lumber trade of the entire country?"

"That would be a gigantic operation, Mr. Strang. It would take millions!"

"There are millions," he said, as simply as though he had remarked that there are pens and paper. "We are used to operations of this kind."

I recovered myself a little, and said firmly: "Of course, in considering such an unusual proposition, I must be informed of the parties who make it."

He made no reply, but taking an envelope from his pocket he drew from it a letter which he handed to me. As I glanced at the heading I leaned back in my chair and stared at him in astonishment. He sat there, grave and silent. After a short pause I turned again to the letter, but the words swam before my eyes. Plodding, industrious and faithful as I had always been, my one great ambition was now suddenly realized. I was recognized by the greatest financial magnates of the age! I was sought by them and my coöperation with them invited! The heading of the letter bore the splendid title of the great Standard Wool Company—the most stupendous aggregation of capital enterprise and monopoly that a wondering world has ever seen; the outgrowth of our country's magnificent resources—of marvelous business ability, and of a simple and Christian life.

When I had recovered a little I read the letter. It was addressed to John Strang, and stated briefly that they had decided that Mr. Dubble was a suitable man to intrust with the project previously decided on. That was all—and I turned to Mr. Strang, ready to lay my time and my entire fortune at his feet—but I didn't tell him so; I simply said: "Of course, this disposes of the question of money and strength, Mr. Strang. I am ready to listen to your project."

He Was a War-horse—a Financial War-horse, and I'd Made No Mistake in Him

He drew another paper from his pocket and handed it to me. "That," he said, "is a memorandum of the various tracts comprising the great oak belt."

The schedule was a marvel of concise completeness. It showed the exact location and size of each parcel; the amount and value of the standing timber; the location and capacity of the sawmills, and particulars about the owners. It was the most complete inventory I ever saw.

"Now for the project, Mr. Dubble; those details you can study at your leisure. Our company does not wish to appear in this matter until the preliminary steps, which you will take, are complete. Our desire is that all the owners shall be induced to form one great company or trust, and our selection of you to promote the company is because of some very clever work you have already done in Seringford and elsewhere."

I tried to murmur out some thanks for this high opinion, but he smiled and went on: "The total valuation of these properties is about fifteen millions. They should be capitalized at sixty millions, and the owners should take stock in payment, in the proportion of four to one—that is, four shares at one hundred dollars par value for each hundred dollars' worth of property turned over. That is tempting enough to carry the matter through with ease. If any of them want cash you will buy the stock and carry it for us; but probably most of them will elect to keep with a company that has such certainty of enormous profit. Having the greatest output of the country, and with competition annihilated, the prices can be put anywhere we please."

"I know little about the lumber trade, Mr. Strang, but it appears to me that there must be considerable oak timber outside of this section."

"There is a little scattered about several other sections," he said, "but being so scattered it is naturally in weak hands, which will disappear as soon as we are ready to operate. That we shall take care of."

Then I said: "It is not quite clear to me yet, Mr. Strang. If, as your company proposes——"

"Directs!" he interrupted sternly but pleasantly.

"Directs," I repeated, stifling a very little rebellious feeling. "If I go ahead and form the combination, these men will, of course, have their own directorate, and will manage their own affairs—the output and the prices. Where, then, does the Standard Wool Company come in?"

"Mr. Dubble," he said impressively, "we are as sure of the control of all as though we held the title-deeds now. When the time comes to show our weapon and our strength we shall order the affairs of that trust as imperatively as you order your office-boy."

"And myself?" I stammered.

"You will stand as a trusted and valued servant of the company. Its rewards are never withheld—are never sparingly doled out."

"But, sir!" I insisted, "this is most extraordinary! I am to devote months of my time, practically abandoning other business, and throw in the timber interest I own, with, possibly, large amounts of cash besides, and with no definite understanding as to how it will all come out!"

"Exactly, Mr. Dubble. I can give you nothing more definite. The company neither gives nor asks a signature in matters of this kind. Its servants must have implicit confidence in it;

must give unswerving obedience in everything; must trust to it blindly for the time and the amount of the reward. Not one who is faithful has ever been disappointed."

"You are placing as extraordinary an amount of confidence in me, Mr. Strang, as you ask me to place in you."

"Did you ever hear, Mr. Dubble," he asked with intense earnestness, "of any suit being brought by this company for breach of contract—of any prosecution for defalcation or embezzlement?"

"I really could not say, Mr. Strang," I replied.

"It has never occurred. 'It' resorts not to the feeble and procrastinating arm of law for its protection or its vengeance. It holds its subjects with a tie more elastic and more binding than the verbose emanations of the Washington coterie, or the futile directions of State legislators. It is neither bound by them, nor does it seek to bind others. Its tie is self-interest—attractive and pliant as a silken ribbon—strong and unyielding as the Rock of Blomidon. Those few who, misled by ill-directed ambition or morbid desire for independence, have deceived it, have never eluded the retaliation which followed—have never seen another period of prosperity or ease of mind. 'The king's wrath is as the roaring of a lion; but his favor is as the dew upon the grass.'"

I was awestricken and subdued.

"I am wholly at your service, Mr. Strang—my fortune, my time and my—er—industry are altogether at your disposal."

"Keep that spirit, Dubble. You cannot place your treasures, both of wealth and intellect, in a safer, surer service than with 'Standard Wool.' Formulate your plans with energy and expedition. Be absolutely silent regarding us. Here is where you can find me for instruction, advice or funds, if needed." And, writing an address on a scrap of paper, he left the office.

"Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." My address that night to the Christian Associates on Self-Advancement was electrical. Young men gazed at me in wondering awe; parents crowded around with tears in their eyes, and invoked blessings on my words. Verbatim reports were published throughout the land by journals secular, religious and—er—yellow; and among my proudest possessions to-day is a testimonial received from the United Manufacturers' Association to the splendid influence of my words. "Such utterances," it stated, "are calculated largely to augment the productive capacity of our young employees, and without increased cost."

. . . . . .

The ownership of the great oak belt was divided between nearly forty men, some of whom were in distant parts of the country. Several were very large holders, and these I went to first, enlisting their interest with but little difficulty. I worked hard and faithfully, patiently smoothing difficulties here, and painting glowing pictures there, until I finally managed to arrange for a meeting of nearly all at Toledo. There were several small owners who hung back and could not be made to see the advantage of coöperation. One of these, Hugh Grant, was exceedingly stubborn, and, being a man of much influence with his neighbors, I was especially anxious to bring him in with us. So I made a second trip out to his mill on this mission.

He had a neat home; a very neat home, indeed. There were flowers and things like that, a little boy also, who stuck his finger in his mouth, looking shyly at me as I drove into the yard. Grant was cordial and hospitable, as, indeed, he might well be, seeing that he lived twenty miles back in this great forest and had but few visitors. He insisted that I stay all night, and vowed that he would talk no business until after supper.

My heart sank as I observed his exceedingly pretty little wife busying herself about the evening meal, for I had often observed that contentment and enterprise are rarely found under the same roof. However, through the evening I argued with him. I told him that, at the rate the timber was being cut, the supply would be exhausted in twenty years; that it was being recklessly and wastefully used, and that even the common people were satisfied with nothing but oak for their furnishings. I showed him that these magnificent groves were the gift of a wise and provident Father, and that it behooved us, as stewards of the same, to guard them from wasteful consumption.

He laughed a little at this, and said: "Can you show me how your trust is going to reduce consumption?"

"Well—er—you see—in one way we could do that by raising the price—that would check the demand."

He shook his head and said decidedly: "It's no use, Mr. Dubble, I can't go into it. I've suffered myself from monopoly and I'll not be a party to it in any way, shape or manner. I believe in a man doing business like a man, and giving the under dog a chance."

So we argued it out. He was a big, impulsive fellow, generous and good-hearted, no doubt, but with very narrow views. It was curious, when he got unduly excited, to see his little wife steal up alongside of him. She would say nothing, but, as he felt the touch of her dress against him, he would look up into her face like a big boy expecting a scolding, and slip his great hand around hers, quieting down instantly. I thought then that if I could gain over the wife to our cause, Grant would be easily won; but this was, of course, impossible, and I left them next morning, marveling, as I journeyed, that the inscrutable wisdom of Providence should make contentment a stumbling-block to enterprise and advancement.

A week later the Toledo meeting was held, about two-thirds of the property-holders being represented. I presented my plans for capitalization, as suggested by Strang, and gave carefully compiled figures showing a possible reduction of, at least, ten per cent. in the handling and sawing of the logs, with, of course, an easy possibility of increasing the selling price by fifteen or twenty per cent. as soon as we were combined. The practical mill-men found no flaw in my statements, and the whole matter was enthusiastically received. Some preliminary organization was effected and I was instructed to file articles of incorporation without delay.

And now I began to get into a queer state of mind. My journeys through that almost inexhaustible belt of valuable timber, and my talks with the owners—many of whom had become as enthusiastic as myself over the splendid prospects of combination—had opened my eyes fully to the gigantic possibilities in this new trust, and occasionally I caught myself sighing at the thought that the great Standard Wool Company and not myself would soon be the directing head of it all.

"The Standard Wool Company! Ha! the Truth Hurts, Don't It?"

M. S. WATSON

At first I steadfastly repressed these thoughts, as the imposing figure of John Strang came to my mind, but again and again they thrust themselves upon me. I pondered upon the method "It" would adopt to secure control after I had organized our great company. I was buying no stock for them; there was no necessity for that. The landowners were all willing to take shares for their properties—that is, all but a few small fellows, whose holdings I judiciously bought in myself, thus acquiring a very large interest, as I was aiming for the presidency.

But how long could I be sure of holding that splendid position? When would the weapon, of which Strang had spoken, be used—and what was it?

I thought of the great Napoleon—how, from the humble start of corporal, he gained, by strategy, perseverance and—er—industry, a position where he overset thrones and gave orders to kings! Why could not *I* be a Napoleon? Wherein was this man Strang more powerful than I? He was older and more experienced—yet I thought of my good work at Weybourne and the far greater results at Seringford. And now, here was the great Lumber Trust, engineered by myself without one dollar of Standard Wool's money or even the use of its name. Surely I had strength and resource, but, when they were ready, I should, perhaps, have to step out; to content myself with any sort of realization of their empty promise. It was not business, and I grew more and more rebellious; and I went to New York determined to again see Strang and possibly obtain some clew to their plans and intentions.

He expressed himself well satisfied with the steps taken, and counseled me to perfect the organization, but I could get nothing out of him about the company's plot. I told him of Hugh Grant's resolute stand, and he drew a little memorandum book from a pigeonhole.

"Always, Mr. Dubble," he said in his quiet, forceful way, "when we commence an operation of this kind we collect full information of the character and standing of the men we have to conciliate or subdue. I find here that Hugh Grant banks at the Toonsville National—that he has borrowed considerable sums there on his notes, occasionally renewing them. Now, Mr. Dubble, that should be sufficient information to a man of your shrewdness to give you the tool you need. Devise some way to secure those notes. You may draw on us for any necessary sums."

So I returned to Indiana and called on the president of the Toonsville National Bank, with whom I was personally acquainted. After some little chat, during which he congratulated me on the prospects of the Lumber Trust, I said:

"By the way, Staples, you hold some paper of Grant's—the lumberman in Cook County?"

"Yes, we do," he replied. "I consider it good, although he is lumber-poor. He comes in with you, I suppose?"

I shook my head mournfully. "That's what is troubling me, Staples. Grant is peculiar and independent, and refuses to join us, and I am much afraid that it will go hard with him. When our company is fully organized and commences operations, I feel that they'll brook no competition or opposition, and, of course, if they run on Grant he's got to go under. I like him and would do much to save him, but I only see one way to do it."

"How is that?"

"Suppose you turn those notes over to me? Then, if he wants renewals, I can easily persuade him to turn in his mill and timber—taking a liberal block of stock in payment—and so place himself in financial ease and safety."

Staples hesitated for a while, but I think I made him feel nervous about the credit, and he finally agreed, so I gave him my check for the paper—eighteen thousand dollars in all. As I expected, when these notes matured Grant wanted to renew, and I made my proposition; but he was still stubborn, although he could obtain no further accommodation at Staples' bank.

"He becometh poor that dealeth with a slack hand." I had undertaken to bring all these various interests under one control, and my duty to my fellow-stockholders was clear. I placed the notes in suit and attached Grant's property; then, as he still refused to agree to our terms, in due time judgment was obtained, and the mill and timber rights were sold by the sheriff. There was no competition, as our company now overshadowed everything, and I bought the property at a very satisfactory price.

During the progress of this suit we had become thoroughly organized. I had been elected president and had taken possession of the new offices of the company at Toonsville. The production and shipment of lumber continued without interruption, and our first step was to raise the prices about fifteen per cent.; and, although this brought on severe criticism from the press and a storm of remonstrance from the consumers, we knew our duty and our power, and flinched not. We made preparations for erecting a gigantic sawmill at Feggsboro', on the Fort Wayne and Bloomington Railroad, and in the heart of the lumber belt—one which would contain the best devices for turning those rugged logs into merchantable boards; and having about me on the directorate the wisest and most experienced men in the trade, our arrangements for systematic work, and large reduction of expense, went forward briskly.

But over it all I always saw the shadow of the great company. The forceful words of John Strang were ever in my ears: "The king's wrath is as the roaring of a lion; but his favor is as the dew upon the grass."

I was standing one afternoon on the steps of the office building, talking with Rainsford and Gann—two of our directors—when Hugh Grant came along the street. He looked haggard and excited, and I at first suspected that he had been drinking. He stopped, and faced me with a hard, bitter, sneering laugh.

"You hound!" he growled in a deep, harsh tone. "Now I know why you have ruined and beggared me, and whose tool you are. Stand where you are!" he yelled, as I turned to enter the office—wishing to avoid a scene. He pulled out a heavy revolver and cocked it. "You'll listen to me

now, or you'll never listen to another man! Keep back, Rainsford! By Heaven, no man shall interfere! This is something you want to know, too. Look at that cur! That lying cur who came up into our woods—the 'magnificent gift of a wise and provident Father,' as his blasphemous tongue put it—and entangled honest men in the net set by those who own him, body and soul; calling us 'stewards of a Heaven-given trust,' while in his heart he was selling us to that Hell-given thing, the Standard Wool Company! Ha! Dubble, the truth hurts, don't it? Your lying brain isn't used to it. It is for them you have ruined me—who wouldn't listen to you—and it is for them you have ruin ready for all who did listen to you. Men, within a week the Fort Wayne and Bloomington Railroad will be leased to the Indiana Central—the Standard Wool Company's road! Where will that cur's boasted profits go then? All in the freight bills! You'll never ship a board except by the grace of the Great Wool Company—and maybe Richard Dubble. You'll never see a dividend! You're trapped and bound. They've bunched you together so as to squeeze you together! They've got you, root and branch! They'll take the clears and leave you the shakes and saps—and there totters their bunco-steerer!"

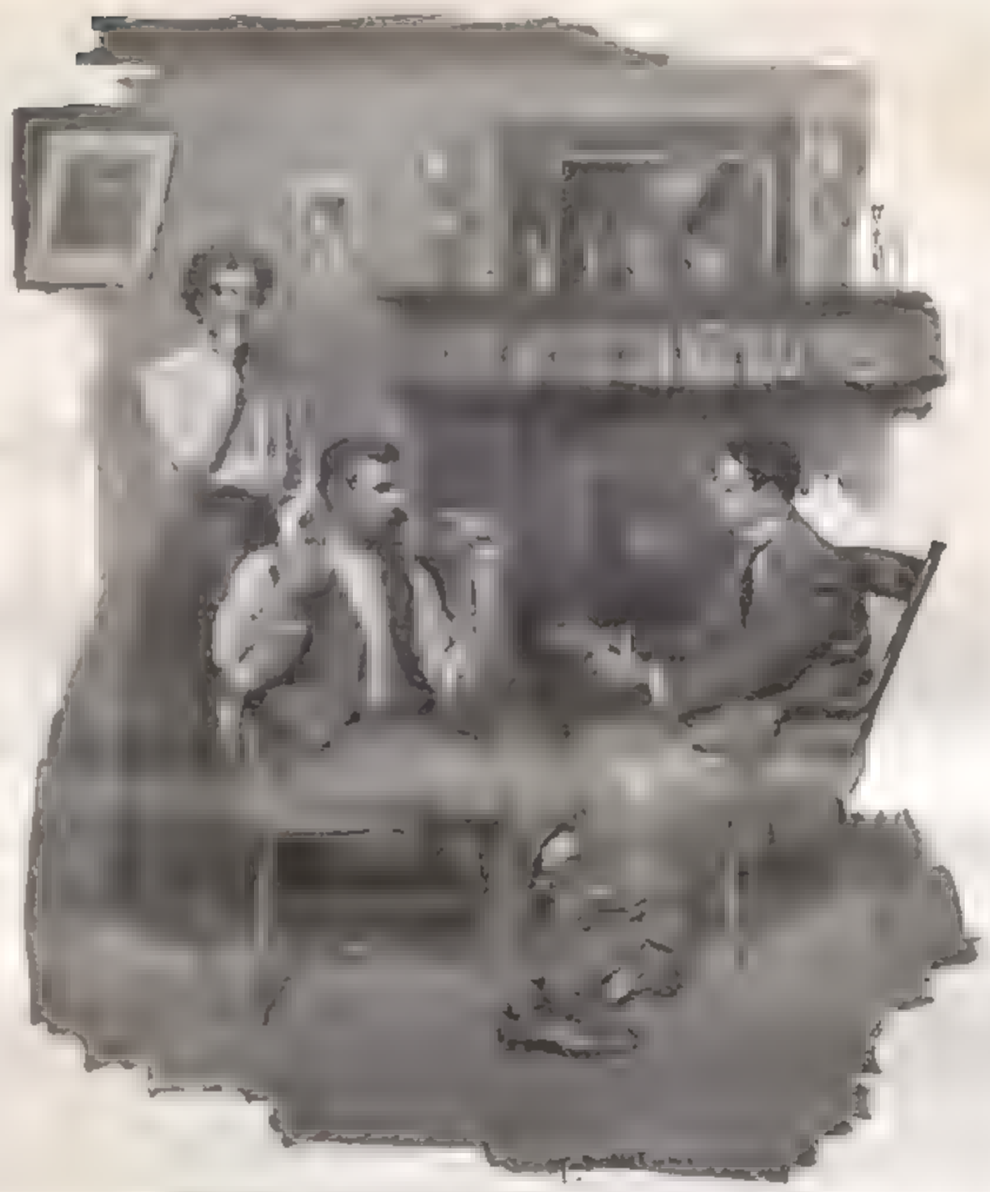
Truly he said "totters," and I grasped Rainsford's arm and stumbled into the building. Sinking down at my desk, I buried my face in my hands, deeply grieved at Grant's cruel words, and paralyzed at his revelation about the lease. The diabolical plot was revealed. I could not doubt his statement. The Fort Wayne and Bloomington road was the only outlet for our lumber: controlling that, the Standard Company had us completely in its hands; we were as helpless as suckling babes. Our stock would drop like bullets down a well. Undoubtedly they had, themselves, revealed my relations with them, so as to discredit me with my directors and still further demoralize our affairs.

"Come, Dubble, brace up, man!" It was Rainsford who spoke. "Grant is feeling sore, you know, and doubtless said more than he meant or knew. Let's talk it over and see what it all amounts to."

This nerved me, and I squared up in my chair. "Rainsford," said I huskily, "Grant's story of my connection with Standard Wool is a dastardly lie! There's not a particle of ground for it, but his statement about the lease, I fear, may be true. I know nothing of it—absolutely nothing—but if it *is* true, then, Rainsford, I'll throw in every dollar I can command—I'll summon every friend and every force—I'll strain every fibre of heart and brain to confuse and defeat this piratical crew! 'Let them be confounded and troubled for ever; yea, let them be put to shame and perish!'"

Never had I been confronted with so bitterly hard a situation. Every dollar of cash which I possessed I had put into the Consolidated Lumber Company. I had also hypothecated a considerable amount of my Seringford Power stock to obtain additional money for the same purpose. But the brilliant prospects of yesterday had now become gloomy and threatening, and my share of the burden was made grievously heavy by the fact that the directors and stockholders, with whom I was in daily contact, evidently believed the story of my collusion with the Standard Wool Company. Their manners were cold and strained—even Rainsford, who had been my staunchest supporter and friend from the first, was reserved and awkward. Altogether I was in hourly dread lest my resignation should be requested.

There were two courses open to me: I could hold to my compact with the Standard Wool people and take my chance of any reward which might follow; but this idea had become detestable to me, for I could not willingly relinquish my eminence to become the tool of that grasping monopoly. The alternative was to stand true to the Lumber Company and fight any outrageous advance in freight rates by any method which I might happily chance upon. Our difficulties were talked over again and again by the directors, and I encouraged them to my utmost to hope that the rates would not be raised, and that we should not be interfered with—although in my own mind I felt sure this was the weapon John Strang had spoken of. I knew now why they had shown no anxiety to acquire stock in our company—it was their sure intention,



Slip His Great Hand Around Hers, Quieting Down Instantly

when they secured control of the railroad, to cripple us both as regards rates and cars, and force our stock down so unmercifully as to get it at practically their own price.

Then another cloud gathered over us. Jaffrey, one of the directors, came to my room one morning with a gray, hard expression on his face, and I saw in a moment that something new had developed.

"Read that, Dubble," he said huskily, as he laid a trade journal before me.

It was a short article stating that for the past two months lumber buyers had been operating in Northern Michigan and Wisconsin, making contracts for the whole of the next five years' output of oak lumber in those parts; and it now appeared that those contracts were made for the Standard Wool Company.

"That settles it, you see!" muttered Jaffrey. "They've got control of all that stuff, and they'll put the price just where they please, and they'll take care we don't interfere with 'em. They'll hold up our shipments while they're taking the cream of the trade."

"We'd better see if we can't make terms with them, Dubble," said Rainsford, who had just come in, "before things get any worse."

"That's no good!" said I decidedly, "when they're ready to make terms we'll know it. Any offer we might make now would show a feeling of weakness."

"Well!" he retorted savagely, "hold on, then, if you think you can bolster up the stock!" And the two men left the office.

"The prudent man looketh well to his going" I got a telegram off at once to my broker, directing him to sell ten thousand shares without delay. This he did, next day, at sixty-four—only eight points below the upset price. I had still a very large amount—about forty thousand shares—and would have willingly closed out at the same price, but I knew that if I offered them it would cause a tremendous slump.

After this I spent day and night among such of the stockholders as I could reach, reasoning with them and persuading them to hold on to their stock, intimating that I might soon hit upon a plan to relieve the situation. I was in the greatest anxiety lest a panic should occur, which, of course, would be instantly taken advantage of by the Wool people. But a few days passed and we had no notice of any change in the freight rates; consequently our stockholders, if not regaining confidence, at least were passive, waiting for some aggressive act by the enemy before sacrificing their holdings.

Then a little ray of light appeared on the horizon. I was talking one afternoon with Rickland, our chief accountant, about some expense item, when I overheard a remark by Dalton, the overseer of the new mill we were erecting at Foggsboro'. It was a trifling, casual remark, relating to the Poweshie Creek, a small stream running through our timber belt, and was so connected with the rest of his sentence as to pass unnoticed by the men he was talking to, but I caught at it as a drowning man clutches at a straw; and I guess I astonished Rickland by the leniency and haste with which I passed over the little discrepancy we had been looking up. I wanted to get back to my room and think.

That evening I took the train for Indianapolis and spent two days in making inquiries and looking up some records at the State House. When I returned to Toonsville I complained of weariness and exhaustion, and said that I would take a short vacation trip to Southern Ohio, where I had friends.

Instead, however, I dropped off at Salada and commenced journeying back toward our timber belt, a distance of thirty miles. It was a farming country, fairly well settled, and I hired teams to carry me forward from point to point as I desired, finally working up through the thick timber to Foggsboro' and thence home by rail.

"Well, Dubble! Your trip's done you good," exclaimed Rainsford when he saw me. "You look first-rate—look as if you'd discovered another railroad hidden among the brush somewhere."

I shook my head sadly, although there was no sadness in my heart—but I had not fully matured my plan, so did not care to say anything about it.

"They've opened the ball, Dubble. We've got a notice from the freight agent that on the fir t of next month rates will be advanced to twenty cents!"

I whistled softly. "That's just double the present rate!"

"It's atrocious villainy!" exclaimed Rainsford. "It's outrageous extortion—a tax of thirty dollars a car."

"What can we do?" I asked.

"I suppose we can take it before the Interstate Commission," he suggested.

I shook my head. "The haul's only to Fort Wayne. After that we go on other lines. This rate is all in the State and the Commission has no authority."

"It'll cut our profits all to pieces," he grunted dismally.

"We must take it out of the consumers, Rainsford," I said cheerfully. "If the stuff costs more to deliver, they'll have to pay more for it."

"But we ought to have that advance ourselves," he retorted savagely. "It's what we've figured on right along. Besides, we don't know that we've got to the end.

"Why Art Thou So Sad, My Prince?" Said Elfrida. "Forget All These Trusts and Companies and Things"

As Grant said, they'll probably cripple us on the shipments—hold back cars and so on."

I was now strongly tempted to tell him my plan, but I had much to think over. I felt that it was absolutely necessary for me to have one good man at least with me, and Rainsford was my choice, but just then, I felt sure, he was suspicious of me. He was a strong man—strong financially and mentally, and if we were to work together he must be in full sympathy with me, and have absolute faith. There was one thing which would knit us firmly together—that was his daughter.

I had visited much at his house, and, although I had no such desire myself, I felt sure that he would welcome me as his son-in-law. The girl, Elfrida, was, I believed, well impressed with me, but she was not very young and had but little attraction for me, either in face or mind. Still, she had three-quarters of a million in her own right, and was the only child. Such a union would be a mighty strength.

True, there was little Helen Safford, with whom I had corresponded so much, and whom I had hoped, when I found time—but there, affairs like that must give way before the requirements of great enterprises! I argued to myself this way: "There was the great Napoleon, who divorced his loved and loving wife, Josephine, for his country's glory and welfare, and shall I let a little matter of hearts interfere with the salvation of this great Trust, in which I have induced friends and neighbors to join?" So I sought an interview with Rainsford, and proposed for his daughter's hand.

He seemed surprised, and a little embarrassed. He sat for a few moments, staring at a picture and chewing his mustache. Then he said:

"Upon my word, Dubble, I'm not displeased to hear this proposition. I have always had a high opinion of you, and I think it due to you that I should be perfectly frank."

"I hope you will be, Mr. Rainsford."

"Don't you think that it would have been better to have postponed this offer until your—er—that is, our affairs were in a little more satisfactory condition?"

"Directs!" He Interrupted Sternly but Pleasantly

"You mean, until it is absolutely determined whether or no I am a traitor to the Lumber Company?"

"Well—er—really, Dubble—you're putting it rather bluntly, you know. Now, I haven't intimated anything of that kind, at all."

"It is but natural," I retorted, "that you should have some little suspicion, although there are absolutely no grounds for any. And it is for that reason that I have hastened to make the offer. I attach so much value to your good opinion, and have so high a one myself of your fairness and judgment, that I have come to you while yet under a cloud, to ask you to favor my suit and to believe my assurance that, instead of the company's prospects being threatened by this great monopoly, they are really brighter than ever. I would not, to-day, sell one share or every share of my stock at less than par!"

"Why—why, Dubble! What does this mean?"

Then I told him about my vacation trip. Step by step I took him over the ground I had been over: up the Salada Valley with its level stretches of wheat land and pasture; along the banks of the Poweshie Creek; through the thick forests of oak, broken at infrequent intervals by some mill clearing or rude settlement. As I progressed, and my plan became clearly outlined, his eyes were fixed on mine with intensity, his teeth were set, and his breath hissed through his nostrils. He was a war-horse—a financial war-horse, and I'd made no mistake in him!

"That settles it, Richard!" he muttered deeply, when I had finished. "You're a bigger man than I thought you were, and I'm proud to take you into my family. I intrust my little Elfie to you with all the confidence you deserve."

I tried to smile happily, but I fear it was only a dismal grin. "Little Elfie!" She was four inches taller than myself and as heavy as Lumber Trust certificates at that gloomy period. How gladly would I have intrusted Rainsford with my proposition to her, but—I knew she was, as Raddle would have said, "long on romance," and I felt that, until I went on my knees to her, I shouldn't get her.

So I called on Miss Rainsford, and the memory of that evening hung by me for quite a while. I think I managed the first part pretty well, but later, when she was doing most of the talking, my thoughts wandered, and I got her and Standard Wool badly mixed. She didn't seem to mind it, however, and she busied herself composing a sonnet, I think she called it. She was "long on poetry," anyway. She entitled it "Dickie and his Elfie"—but I don't remember the lines, and I'm glad I don't! There was I, whose sole object for years had been the watchful care of watered stock, and the culling of dividends, pictured as wandering hand in hand with little Elfie, watching the lowing kine, drinking the limpid stream, and culling buttercups!

"How beautifully wonderful it is!" she exclaimed, running her fingers into my hair—"that my knight, fearless

(Continued on Page 31)

The Penalties of Plutocracy

By David Graham Phillips

A Little Study of the Disease Called Wealth

THERE is a large class of Americans—far, far too large—with whom want is the haunting terror, never less than a menacing shadow, often a fierce wrestler, bent on a life-and-death battle. But, with the great mass of us, the haunting terror is not fear of actual want but fear of descent. How to hold the ground gained, how to avoid misstep and slip, how to ascend since ascent is the only guarantee against descent—these are the teasing, the tormenting anxieties. And, as wealth is the all but universally accepted measure of progress, the test is: "Have I more or less than I had last year?"

The higher up the man or woman is, the greater becomes this anxiety, until among the rich it is a torment from which only the man or the woman with the exceptional temperament escapes. It may be, indeed doubtless is, all a vanity. But "what saith the preacher?" And to man, the only completely self-conscious animal and therefore the vainest, there are other tortures than hunger and cold, others with fangs full as long and full as sharp.

In the parable, the rich man, having achieved his desire for bigger barns full to bursting, is mocked in the hour when he was about to begin enjoying himself by the swoop of the Angel of Death. In this modern version of the parable, let us say that the rich man, instead of being mocked by death, was mocked by life. He didn't die, he lived on in sleepless, haggard vigil over his bursting barns.

A few years ago an American, one of the richest men in the world, wept at the news that a huge sum he had let out at interest had been paid. "Here, I thought *that* was out of the way for ten years!" he cried. "*How* shall I reinvest it?" The tears seem ludicrous, unless you happen to have the power to put yourself in this rich man's place. You perhaps picture him, as do the sensational newspapers, as a happy, haughty creature rolling in wealth, driving his chariot joyously over the necks of the multitude. And no doubt he, being nothing of a philosopher, regards himself as a fit object for admiration and envy. But, in fact, he is the abject, cringing, trembling, terror-stricken slave of his wealth. He would no more give it up than the Russian Czar would vacate his seat of torture; but that does not change the fact, does it? In upon him, as upon every rich man, pours money that must be invested. And it must be invested well; for the loss of the sum invested is only a part, usually only a trifling part, of the loss from a bad investment by a rich man.

One of the heirs of a great American estate, one who somehow got a great reputation as a conservative business man—probably because he was stupid and stingy and silent—lost nearly half the vast fortune his father left him. And he invested with the greatest caution and chose enterprises that seemed securely sound. Most of the "lambs" that enable Wall Street to "open wide" so prodigally are rich men. They know what Wall Street is. Yet they, made desperate by the necessity for finding investments, go into Wall Street and see their forebodings mournfully realized.

Finance" has become a highly strenuous, cut-throat game. The rich men whose names are in every one's mouth as synonymous for wealth and power are an anxious, harassed, miserable crew. Not one of them is happy. For he knows not in what hour he may tread upon the mines laid by his rival multi-millionaires and be blown to atoms. Not long ago one of the famous rich men of this country was in a single week reduced from power and a vast secure fortune to the verge of bankruptcy. He was very enterprising; the prospect of great gains drew him into a huge undertaking. He borrowed large sums of money; but apparently his fortune was not in the least imperilled. All in an instant his associates, bribed or frightened by a powerful and vindictive enemy, deserted him; the banks called his loans; newspapers, subsidized by his rival, exposed some of his peculiar methods, and he saw not only ruin but disgrace staring him in the face. He succeeded in escaping—by an audacious trick that would be called blackmail anywhere but in Wall Street.

This is a typical case. Not one of the great financiers knows what peace of mind means. A sentry patrolling within sight of the enemy's camp-fire feels secure in comparison. For the great financier fears his foes less than he fears his friends. He knows that capital is both timid and treacherous, and that, in the race for supremacy in wealth, both the code of morals and the code of honor are suspended. Hence the insomnia and nervous indigestion that plague the militant section of the plutocracy.

In the good old days, land—farm-land—was the chief item of wealth; and the lord of the estate was secure, absolutely secure, against any attack upon his fortune. We have changed all that. To-day no form of wealth is secure—not even land. Is not the price of the products of the soil dependent on the will of the great financial gambler? And cannot the land be made a burden instead of a source of income by the exercise of the taxing power, vested in the politicians who are the puppets of plutocracy? If the land is not secure, what shall be said of the industries? Of course, the industries controlled by the great financiers are necessarily insecure. How can it be otherwise when they are subject to the ravages of all these schemers? As for those industries not in the grasp of the Wall Street crowd, there you have the fiercest, the most incessant competition. And the rich man, the framework of whose fortune is an industrial enterprise of any kind, dares not sleep, dares not trust anybody. He may take vacations; but he will be fretted by the fear that he will find a mess or nothing at all when he returns.

As the last straw, the crowning harassment, politics is taking an ever more industrial form. And this is a land of universal suffrage, where most of the voters own no property at all, where seven-eighths of the wealth is in the hands of one-eighth of the people, where fifty per cent. of the wealth is owned by one per cent. of the people, where the agitation of rich against poor is growing

ever stronger! When the rich man has no more immediate worries he can give himself to studying the sombre political horizon of the future. Its gloomy and threatening aspect to the possessor of unjust wealth cannot but affect all possessors of great wealth. In the palaces of the plutocracy one often hears the most ludicrous pessimism about a "bloody revolution"—and the talk is in deadly earnest, so far away from understanding of the temper of the American masses have many of the very rich drifted.

But the average rich man has little time to spare for that remote and conjectural worry. When a man is poor or has only moderate wealth, he can have friends, free social intercourse. Not so when he is very rich. He soon gets the idea that every one who comes near him is thinking about his money—and he is usually not far from the sad truth. Most of these people are longing in the usual vague human way; a few are more definite, and it is these crafty and scheming ones that make him so nervous. He dares not relax with anybody. The apparently harmless and guileless person whose unsuspicious manner is seducing him into the trance that precedes the successful "touch" may be one of the subtlest and most dangerous of the plotters against his fortune. It is hard for a rich man, with the mercenary side of human nature thus always thrust at him, to keep himself from mean suspicions even of his own family, convinced of the mercenary designs of all who are civil to him. But it is harder still for him to get any sort of peace of mind.

The Dead Men's Warnings

WHENEVER a multi-millionaire dies, other millionaires like to look over the schedule of his holdings, and their minds linger longest upon those items which betray the dead man's moments of weakness. There will be item after item of "cats and dogs"; there will be huge blocks of once promising but now all but worthless stocks and bonds. Among the unpaid notes will be scores bearing the signatures of the dead man's "friends." And, as the still living millionaire studies these warnings against friendship and against the seduction of the promoter who belongs to clubs that millionaires frequent, he hardens his heart. "I must be more careful," he mutters, "or these rascals will get everything I've got away from me." And the suspicious gleam in his eyes develops toward the frank look of cynical hostility

Extravagant luxury is not Nature's only remedy for the abnormality of the multi-millionaire, nor is it her best remedy. There is a far better one in injudicious investment; and the best of all is the judicious investment that some other multi-millionaire undermines and destroys

But these business harassments, which those not so rich share with the very rich, by no means cover the whole of the penalties of plutocracy which strive to maintain the balance with the penalties of poverty. A very rich woman, trying to keep awake at the opera in New York, said: "Except on ocean steamer, I haven't had a decent night's rest in years. They won't let me sleep. They begin knocking at my door at seven in the morning"

"But why don't you forbid it?" asked the woman who had gone to the opera with her.

"What'd be the use?" cried the rich one. "They'd make a noise of some other kind, and get me awake. I tell you, they won't let me sleep."

Who were "they"? Not the servants alone, but everybody she knew well—shopkeepers and social associates, grafters of all kinds. "They" wanted a whack at the old woman's money. So "they" began early. "Come," commanded the knock. "Wake up there! Begin to spend your money!"

The envious less-rich smile incredulously. "If I were in her place I'd soon stop that," he or she says. But think a moment. These people who want her money are not stupid, and their naturally shrewd wits are made still shrewder by their necessities, real or fancied. They do not go rudely at her; they do not even let her see that it is they upon whom she is expected to spend her money. They have thought out most adroit methods of approach, and she can no more escape them than a rabbit can escape a greyhound. "Come! You have slept or read or shut yourself in long enough! Issue forth and spend your money on us!" The servants, the dependents, the sycophants, all must have the chance to make her feel that they are useful to her, and that they get less than they should have. Then there are her business, her household, her social projects, her charitable, church and philanthropic enterprises—all must have attention. And with whom does she, must she, associate? With people who want something and are determined to have it. Other kinds of people are all but forbidden her. In the first place, she has been brought up to expect more consideration than she could get from any one who had nothing to gain by associating with her. In the second place, the most of those of that unseeking class are themselves rich and are too busy with their own group of seekers to have much time to associate with their "equals." The very rich at once abhor and crave parasitism, abhor its expensiveness, crave its sycophancy. Without it how could they keep up their flattering delusion that they are great personages? The angry glance that the rich man casts over his courtier-crowded anteroom is mildness itself in comparison with the glance he would cast over it were he to find it empty.

True, the very rich man or woman gets a great deal of the food he or she likes best at small or insignificant cost There are so many men and women who will pay court to him or her just for the sake of being near some one they regard as their superior. But, like everything else that is cheap or free, this food is not of the most satisfying quality. Real groveling, real flattery and real attention must be paid for and paid well for—so well that he or she must keep the account rigidly, must examine its every item, under penalty of being frightfully cheated and sold. This involves worry, a most harassing and assiduous kind of worry.

Balancing the limitations of poverty are the conventions of affluence. Whether rich or poor, the human animal thus remains bond. The autocrat of all the Russias has his routine marked out so rigidly for him that the meanest of his subjects is in many respects less a slave than he. The richer a man is, the more things he is expected to do, and therefore must do; and they all cost money—a great deal of money. And, unless the greatest care is exercised, they will cost more money than any man, even the richest, can afford. The poor man "flies light"; the rich man flies heavy; the very rich man cannot fly at all. He is compelled to crawl along with the great baggage-train which the convention for multi-millionaires has compelled him to accumulate. If he is a fashionable multi-millionaire the baggage-train contains houses and staffs of wasteful servants, yachts and horses and works of art. If he is a philanthropic millionaire, the baggage-train contains hordes of parasites and dependents who may not be neglected, or even banished from mind for a time. And no man is, or ever was, or ever will be rich enough to be able to afford the enormous cost which assigning the care of the baggage-train to an agent would entail. The master must himself be slave to it

How it Feels to be a Multi-Millionaire

TO WATCH the faces in the parade of carriages at the fashionable hour in any of our great cities is to see a panorama of discontent—and you see only the women If the men were there, not the brightest sunshine would drive away your feeling that the day was overcast. A philosopher would say: "I could wish mine enemy no greater evil than that he should have his heart's desire—if that desire is great wealth."

The supreme penalty of poverty is the associations it imposes; and that is also the supreme calamity of wealth. Poverty's associations breed one set of moral degradations; wealth's associations breed another set. Between the two sets, one who looks at souls alone and disregards exteriors, would find it difficult to decide which involved the lesser evils. A man said to one of the great millionaires: "How does it feel to be as rich as you are?" The rich man did not take the remark as a jest; he thought about it soberly for a moment, then said: "Until I was worth five million dollars I think I was a pretty decent sort of chap. Ever since I have been getting steadily meaner, until to-day I'm really not fit to live."

That man had rare ability at introspection, and doubtless he judged himself by an ideal standard instead of comparing himself with the average run of men. But his melancholy confession had more than a grain of truth in it. And his wealth gradually drove away all his old friends, expelled from his nature all his once great lightness of heart, developed his instincts to tyranny, dried up his fellow-feeling for the rest of mankind except a cold and calculating "philanthropy," drove him to daily tasks such as the cruelest of masters would not set for the most willing of slaves, killed him at sixty-two when he had inherited a vitality that should have carried him on to eighty. And still his wealth was not done. He had been "too busy" to look after his family. His principal heir was a boy who is to-day a still rich but exposed and disgraced profligate. And if that young man should ever marry and have children, the story of calamity will be continued.

Men Who Refuse to Become Rich

THE fact that these sufferers from the disease of great wealth do not realize their own deplorable state, or do not rightly fix the blame for it, does not change the central truth. Note the most obvious form in which this anxiety through associations shows itself—the mode of life of the wives and children of so many of our very rich men. There are exceptions—many and notable exceptions. But as a rule the families of very rich men are seduced by the associations into the craziest pomposities and extravagances that cannot but give the head of the family many an angry and many a heartsick hour. And his depression or disgust or fury is not lessened by the realization that he is powerless, that the family is being swept on down the current of folly to moral if not to material disaster by forces which he could control only by flinging away his vast wealth.

The time may come when there will be evolved a human brain great enough and strong enough to bear with ease and without suffering the responsibilities of vast wealth. But as the brain is constituted to-day, whenever a man's responsibilities get beyond a very simple stage—the management of his domestic affairs and a single compact business enterprise—there is an end to the substantial joys of life, an end to leisure, to freedom of mind, to natural intercourse with fellow-beings, to belief in human nature and, worst of all, to opportunity for broad, sympathetic, courageous development of mind and character. Harassed by the cares of multiform enterprises that are not and can never be all at once in satisfactory condition, tormented by swarms of parasites, tempted by burdensome ostentations that come disguised as luxurious comfort, so terrified by the ever-widening streams of outflowing wealth that he has no time to enjoy the spectacle of the ever-widening inflowing streams, the plutocrat leads a life whose most pitiful feature is that he does not realize, except in rare and brief moments of sanity, what a pitiable object he is. He is admired, respected, feared, envied—but he can neither love nor be loved

There is a theory that philosophizing about the sorrows of the very rich is a form of consolation much affected by those who are not very rich; that any man would be a Rockefeller if he could. But that theory has no solid foundation. Philosophy's verdict against great riches is accepted and acted upon by millions of men. There are thousands and thousands who have considerable fortunes and who could become very rich if they wished: they do not, simply because they have too sound sense, too true a measure of proportions. There are millions who are comfortably off and could become rich, perhaps very rich, if they were willing to make the sacrifices, to undertake the misfortunes and miseries. They voluntarily refrain. Again, there are many, very many rich men who have got rich as an incident to carrying out with unusual ability some enterprise which deeply interested them, and who fight to keep down their own wealth, because they see only too clearly what a calamity becoming a plutocrat inevitably involves.

The plutocrat, whether voluntary or involuntary—and there are not a few involuntary plutocrats—is to be pitied. His soul is ravaged by a disease, as truly a disease as the morphine or drink habit. And it gives him no rest until it thrusts him into his grave—and it ravages his heirs unto the third and fourth generations.

His Worship, the Chief Justice

By F. Hopkinson Smith

Around the Wood Fire in No. 3 Mac Dilates on the Human Side of the Big St. Bernard and His Fellow-Dogs

THE group about the blazing logs was enriched this afternoon by a new member. Lonnegan had brought his dog, a big white and yellow St. Bernard, fluffy as a girl's muff, a huge, splendid fellow, who answered with great dignity and with considerable condescension to the name of "Chief," an abbreviation of "His Worship, the Chief Justice."

No other name would have suited him: grave, dignified, wide-browed, with deep, thoughtful eyes, ponderous of form, slow in his movements, keeping perfectly still minutes at a time, he needed only a wig and a pair of big-bowed spectacles to make him the fitting occupant of any Bench

Mac put his arm around Chief's neck before His Worship had fully made up his mind as to where he would place his august person.

The salutation over, and the dog's soft, fur-tippet ears having been duly rubbed, and his finely modeled cheeks pressed close between Mac's two warm hands—their two noses were but an inch apart—His Worship stretched himself out at full length on the rug before the fire, his nose resting on his extended paws, his kindly eyes fixed on the crackling logs.

"Lonnegan," said Mac in a thoughtful tone, "do you know, I think a good deal more of you since you got this dog? I didn't know you were that human," and Mac changed his seat so that he could rest his hand on Chief's head.

"Lonnegan hasn't anything human about him," broke in Boggs, tugging at his collar to give his fat throat the more room—"not in your sense, Mac. If you will study the Great Architect as closely as I have done you will see that his humanity is always to keep one point ahead of the social game." Here Boggs got up and moved his chair to the other side of the fireplace, so as to be out of reach of Lonnegan's long arms.

"Let me explain—for I don't want to do this distinguished gentleman any injustice. You and I, Mac, being common-sense people, without any frills about us, wear just an ordinary plain scarfpin—a horseshoe, or a gold ball, or some such trifle. Lonnegan must have a scarab, or a coin two thousand years old—same thing in his dress, if you study him. You will note that his collars are an inch higher than ours, his scarfs twice as puffy, his coat-tails longer, his trouserloons more baggy—not offensively baggy, gentlemen," and he waved his hand to the coterie. "Perhaps more unique in cut, so to speak. It is the same with his dogs. This big St. Bernard, hulking along after the Great Architect when he takes his afternoon walk up and down the Avenue, is quite in conformity with Lonnegan's other frills. You and I would affect an inconspicuous canine—a poodle, a terrier, or a bull-pup. Not so Lonnegan. He wants a dog as big as a mule. It's a better advertisement than two columns in a morning paper. 'My dear,' says a stout lady, built in two movements, to her husband at a theatre" (Boggs' imitation of a society woman's drawl was now inimitable), "'I saw such a magnificent St Bernard coming up the Avenue Belongs to Mr Lonnegan, the architect. He certainly is a man of very exquisite taste; I think it would be a good idea for you to consult him about the plans for our ——'"

Lonnegan sprang from his seat with a look in his eye as if he intended to throttle Boggs on the spot. At the same instant the great dog drew in his paws and rose to his feet, his eyes fixed on his master's movements—rose as an athlete rises, using the muscles of his knees and ankles to pull his body erect. If his master was in danger he was ready. Only smothered laughter, however, came from both Boggs and Lonnegan.

"I take it all back, Lonny," spluttered Boggs. "The woman's husband wanted two country houses, not one. Call off your dog. I can't fight two brutes at once."

Pitkin sprang to his feet, his partly bald head and forehead rose-pink in the excitement of the moment

"Don't call your dog off, Lonny!" he cried. "Don't move. Choke Boggs again. Just look at the pose of that dog. Isn't that stunning? By Jove, fellows! Wouldn't he be a corker in bronze, life size? Just see the line of the back and lift of the head!" And the sculptor, after the manner of his guild, held the edge of his hand against his eye as a guide by which to measure the proportions of the noble beast.

Lonnegan relaxed his hold, and Boggs, now purple in the face from loss of breath and laughter, shook himself free and rearranged his collar with his plump fingers. The attention of the whole fireside was now centred on the dog. His pose was less tense and his legs less rigid, but his paws had kept their original position on the rug. As he stood trying to comprehend the situation, he had the bearing of a charger overlooking a battlefield.

Both Man and Dog Had Had a Hard Day's Work and a Poor One

"No, you're wrong, Pitkin!" said Marny. "Chief would be lumpy and inexpressive in bronze. He's too woolly. You want clear-cut anatomy when you're going to put a dog or any other animal in bronze. Color is better for Chief. I'd use him as a foil to a half-nude, life-size scheme of brown, yellow and white; old Chinese jar on her left filled with chrysanthemums, some stuffs in the background—I can see it now——" and Marny picked up a bit of charcoal and blocked in on a fresh canvas resting on Mac's easel the position of the figure, the men crowding about him to watch the result.

"Won't do, old man!" broke in Woods, as soon as Marny's rapid outline became clear. "Out of scale—all dog and no girl. I'd have him stretched out as he is now"—(Chief had regained his former position)—"with a fellow in a chair reading; lamplight on book for high light; dog in half shadow."

"You're quite right, Woods," remarked Mac, who was still caressing Chief's silky ears. "Marny's missed it this time—girl scheme won't do. This is a gentleman's dog, and he has always moved among his kind."

"Careful, Mac, careful," drawled Boggs, in a reproving tone. "You said 'has moved.' You don't mean to reflect on his present owner, do you?"

Mac waved Boggs away with the same gesture with which he would have brushed off a fly and continued:

"When I say that he has always lived among *gentlemen* I state the exact fact. You can see that in his manners and in the way in which he retains not only his self-respect, but his courage and loyalty. You noticed, did you not, that it took him but an instant to get on his feet when Lonnegan seized Boggs? You will also agree with me that no one has entered this room this winter more gracefully, nor with more ease and composure, nor one who has known better what to do with his arms and legs. And as for his well-bred reticence, he has yet to open his mouth—certainly a great rebuke to our garrulous Boggs, if he did but know it," and Mac nodded in the direction of the Chronic Interrupter. "Great study, these dogs. Chief has had a gentleman for a master, I tell you, and has lived in a gentleman's house, accustomed all his life to Oriental rugs, wood fires, four-in-hands, two-wheeled carts, golden-haired children in black velvet suits, servants in livery—regular thoroughbred. That is, *bred thorough*, by somebody who never insulted him, who never misunderstood him, and who never mortified him. Offending a dog is as bad as offending a child, and ten times worse than offending a woman. A dozen men would spring to a woman's assistance—no one ever interferes in a quarrel between a dog and his master. When they do they generally take the master's side."

Mac reached over, tapped the bowl of his pipe against the brick of the fireplace, emptied it of its ashes, and laying it on the mantel resumed his seat.

"It's pathetic to me," he continued, "to see how hard some dogs try to understand their masters. All they can do is to take their cue from the men who own them. It isn't astonishing, really, that they should sometimes copy them. It only takes a few months for a butcher to make his dog as bloody and as brutal as the toughest hand in his shop."

"What a responsibility," sighed Boggs, turning toward Lonnegan. "You won't corrupt His Worship with any of your Murray Hill swaggerdoms, will you, Lonny?"

Lonnegan closed one eye at Boggs and wagged his chin in denial. Mac went on:

"Dogs can just as well be educated up as educated down. There is no question of their ability to learn—not the slightest. I am not speaking of the things they are expected to know—hunting, rat-catching, and so on—I mean the things they are *not* expected to know. If you'd like to hear how they can understand each other get the Colonel to tell you about those two dogs he saw in Constantinople some two years ago," and he turned to me.

"It wasn't in Constantinople, Mac," I answered; "it was in Stamboul, on the Plaza of the Hippodrome."

"Near where I was murdered, and where I still lie buried?" Boggs asked gravely, with a sly wink at Marny.

"Yes, within a stone's throw of your present sacred tomb, old man, up near the Obelisk. That Plaza is the home of four or five packs of street curs, who divide up the territory among themselves, and no dog dares cross the imaginary line without getting into trouble. Every day or so there is a pitched battle directed by their leaders—always the biggest dog in the pack. What Mac refers to occurred some years ago, when I was looking over my easel and saw a lame dog skulking along by a low wall that forms the boundary of one side of the Plaza. He was on three legs, the other held up in the air. A big, shaggy brute, the leader of another pack, made straight for him, followed by three others. The cripple saw them coming, and at once lay down on his back, his injured paw thrust up. The big dog stood over him, and heard what he had to say; I was not ten feet from them, and I understood every word.

"'I am lame, gentlemen, as you see,' he pleaded, 'and I am on my way home. I am in too much pain to walk around the side of the Plaza where I belong, and I therefore humbly beg your permission to cross this small part of your territory.'

"The big leader listened, snarled at his companions who were standing by ready to help tear the intruder to pieces, sent them back to their quarters with a commanding toss of his head, and walked by the side of the cripple until he had cleared the corner; then he slowly returned to his pack. There was no question about it; if the cripple had spoken English I could not have understood him better."

"That's nothing," broke in Pitkin. "I watched a dog once in Granada tormented by fleas. He could get every one of them with his teeth except a bunch that were tucked under his lower jaw—these drove him nearly crazy. Up comes another dog, hears his tale of woe, goes for the fleas, the first dog standing perfectly still while he bit them. That I saw myself—saw the dog ask the other dog's help to bite for him, and watched the infinite peace that came into his face over the relief."

"I can beat that yarn," chimed in Woods, "so far as sympathy is concerned. I was in an omnibus once going up the Boulevard des Italiennes, when a man on the seat opposite me whistled out of the end window, his two dogs were following behind the 'bus. One was a white bull-terrier, the other a Canische poodle black as ink. Whenever anything got in the way—and it is pretty crowded along there—the dogs fell behind. When they appeared again the owner would whistle to let them know where he was. All of a sudden I heard a yell. The poodle had been run over. I could see him lying flat on the asphalt, kicking

Editor's Note—This is the sixth of a series of stories by F. Hopkinson Smith, each complete in itself, but all told beside The Wood Fire in No. 3. The next story will appear in an early number.

The man stopped the omnibus and sprang out, and a crowd gathered. In that short space of time the terrier had fastened his teeth in the poodle's collar, had dragged him clear of the traffic to the sidewalk, and was bending over him licking the hurt. Four or five people got out of the stage—I among them—and a cheer went up for the owner when he picked up the injured dog in his arms and took him clear of the crowd, the terrier following behind as anxious as a mother over her child. I have believed in the sympathy of dogs for each other ever since."

"My turn now," said Boggs. "My uncle's got a poodle, answers to the name of Mirza. Got more common-sense than anything that walks on four legs. They keep a bowl in one corner of the dining-room which is always filled with water so the dog can get a drink when she wants it. My uncle says that's one thing half the people who own dogs never think of—dogs not being able to turn faucets. Well, they shifted servants one day and forgot to tell the new one about the bowl. Mirza did her best to make the maid understand—pulled her dress, and sniffed around the empty teacups. No use. Then an idea struck the dog. She made a spring for the empty bowl and rolled it over with her forepaws from the dining-room into the butler's pantry. By that time the wooden-headed idiot understood, and Mirza got her drink."

During the discussion Mac sat with the great head of the St. Bernard resting on his knee. It was evident that His Worship had found an acquaintance whom he could trust, one whom he considered his equal. For some minutes the painter looked into the dog's face, his hands smoothing the dog's ears, the St. Bernard's eyes growing sleepy under the caress. Then Mac said in a half-audible tone, speaking to the dog, not to us:

"You've got a great head, old fellow, full of sense. All your bumps are in the right place. You know a lot of things that are too much for us humans. I wish you'd tell me one thing. You know what we all think of you, but what do you think of us—of your master, Lonnegan—of this crowd—this fireplace? Speak out, old man; I'd like to know."

Boggs shifted his fat body in his chair, jerked his head over his shoulder, and winked meaningly at Lonnegan, saying in a low voice

"Mac is going to give us one of his remi-nuisances—I know the sign."

"Make the dog begin on Boggs, Mac!" cried Woods

"No, Chief's too much of a gentleman. He knows all about Boggs, but he won't tell—not when there are gentlemen present."

"Get him to whisper it then in your off ear," suggested Boggs. "He'll surprise you with his estimate of one of Nature's noblemen," and he thrust his thumbs in the armholes of his waistcoat.

"No, you'll keep it to yourself, won't you, Chief?" continued Mac. "But I'm not joking; I'm in dead earnest. Anybody can find out what a man thinks of a dog, but what does a dog think of a man, especially some of those two-legged brutes, who, by right of dollars, claim to own him? I took the measure of a man once who ——"

Boggs sprang from his seat and struck one of his ringmaster attitudes.

"What did I tell you, gentlemen? Just as I expected, the remi-nuisance has arrived. Give him room! The great landscape painter is about to explode with another tale of his youth. You took the measure of a man once, I think you said, Mac. Was it for a suit of clothes or a coffin? No, don't explain; keep right on."

"Yes, I did," said Mac in a low, earnest tone, ignoring Boggs' aside, "and I've never taken any stock in him since. I don't think any of you know him, and it's just as well that you don't. I may be a little quixotic about these things—guess I am, but I'm going to stay so. I met this Quarterman—that's more than he deserves; he's nearer one-eighth of a man than a quarter—up at the club house on Salt Beach. I was a guest—he was a member. Big, heavily-built young fellow—weighed about two hundred pounds—rather good-looking; wore the best of English shooting-togs; carried an English gun and carted around a lot of English leather cases bound in brass, with his name-plate on them—a regular out-and-out sport of the better type, I thought, when I first saw him. He had with him one of the most beautiful, reddish-brown setters I ever laid my eyes on—what you'd get with burnt sienna and madder—with a coat as fine and silky as a camel's-hair brush—one of those clean-mouthed, clean-toothed, agate-eyed, sweet-breathed dogs that every girl loves at first sight, and can no more help putting her hands on than she can help coddling a roly-poly kitten just out of a basket. He had the same well-bred manners that Chief has; the same grace of movement; same repose, only more gentle and more confiding. The only thing that struck me as peculiar about him was the way he watched his master. He seemed to love him, and yet to be afraid of him; always ready to bound out of his way, and yet equally ready to come when he was called—a manner which he never showed to any stranger who tried to make friends with him

"I saw Quarterman that morning when he started out alone, quail-shooting, the setter bounding before him, running up and springing at him, and off again—doing all the things a human dog does to tell a man how happy he is to go along, and what a lot of fun the two are going to have.

"About six o'clock that night the two returned. I was sitting by the wood fire—a good deal bigger one than this, the logs nearly six feet long—when the outer door was swung back and Quarterman came in, his boots covered with mud, his bird-bag over his shoulder. The setter followed close at his heels, his beautiful brown coat covered with burrs and dirt. Both man and dog had had a hard day's work and a poor one, judging from the bird-bag which hung almost flat against Quarterman's shoulder.

"Everybody pushed back their chairs to make room for the tired-out sportsman.

"'What luck?' cried out half a dozen men at once.

"Quarterman, without answering, stopped in the middle of the room some distance from the fire, laid his gun on the table, reached around for his bird-bag, thrust in his hand, drew out a small quail—all he had shot—and threw it with all his might against the wall of the fireplace, where it dropped into the ashes—threw it as a boy would throw a brick against a fence. Then, with a vicious thrust of his boot, he kicked the setter in the face! The dog gave a cry of pain and crawled under the table and out of the room.

"Then Quarterman found his voice. 'Luck!' he growled. 'Footed it fifteen miles clear over to Pottsburg, and that d——d dog scared up every bird before I could get a shot at it!' And without another word he mounted the stairs to his room.

"His opinion of the dog was now common property. I had heard it; we'd all heard it. If any man disagreed with him he kept his opinion to himself, I included. But what did the setter think of Quarterman? He had followed him all day through swamps and briers, had run, jumped, crept on his belly, sniffed, scented and nosed into every tuft of grass and brush-heap where a quail could hide itself; had walked miles to the man's one, leaped fences, scoured hills, raced down country roads and over ditches, had pointed and flushed a dozen birds the brute couldn't hit, and, after doing his level best, had come back to the club house expecting to get a warm corner and a hot supper—his right, as well as Quarterman's—and instead got a kick in the face.

"I ask you now, what did the dog think of him? Dirty brute! If I knew where he was I think I'd go and thrash him now."

The coterie broke out into a laugh over Mac's indignation, but a laugh in which there was more love than ridicule.

"Yes, I would! I feel like it this minute, but I tell you the setter got his revenge, a revenge that showed his blood and breeding—the revenge of a gentleman.

"Back of the club house was a swampy place where some cranberry raisers had dug holes and squares trying to get something to grow, and back of this was another swamp perhaps a mile or two wide where nothing would grow. Ugly place, full of suck-holes, twisted briers and vines, where they told Quarterman he could get some woodcock or snipe, or whatever you do get in a marsh. The setter rose to his feet to accompany him (this was two days later) but was met with: 'Go back, d——n you!' followed by an aside: 'What that fool dog wants is a dose of buckshot, and he'll get it if he ain't careful!'

"When dinner was served that evening the steward went upstairs expecting to find Quarterman asleep on his bed. No Quarterman! At ten o'clock we got uneasy and started out to look for him, a party of three, the two servants carrying stable lanterns. The setter again rose to his feet, wondering what was up, and was again rebuffed, this time by the steward.

"We soon found that fooling around a swamp of a dark night, with your eyes blinded by a lantern, was no joke. Every other step we took we fell into holes or got tripped up by briers. We stumbled on, skirting by the edge of the cranberry patch, hollering as loud as we could, stopping to listen, then going on again. We tried the other big swamp, but that was impossible in the dark. Then an idea popped into my head. I gave the lantern I was carrying to one of the men, hollered to the others to stay where they were till I got back, cleared the cranberry-patch, struck out for the club house on a run, sprang upstairs, grabbed Quarterman's coat hanging in the closet, ran downstairs again, and shoved it under the nose of the setter. Then I told him all about it, just as I'd tell you. Quarterman was lost—he was in the swamp, perhaps, we didn't know where—and the dog was the only one who could find him. Would he go? Go! You just ought to have seen him! He threw his nose up in the air, sniffed around, made a spring from the porch and began circling the lawn, his nose to the ground and sand—then he made a bound over the fence and disappeared.

"I hollered for the others, and we kept after the setter as best we could. Every now and then he would give a short bark—sometimes far away, sometimes nearer. All we could do was to skirt along the edge of the cranberry-patch, swinging the lanterns, and hollering: 'Quarterman! Quarterman!' until our throats gave out.

"Then I heard a quick, sharp bark, followed by a series of short yelps not fifty yards away. Next there came a faint halloo—a man's voice. We pushed on, and there, about ten yards from hard ground, we found Quarterman stretched out, the setter squatting beside him. He had slipped into a hole some hours before, had broken his ankle, and had made up his mind to wait until daylight, the pain, every time he moved, almost making him faint. He was soaked to the skin and shivering with cold. We helped him up on one foot, carried him to dry land, and finally got him home; the dog following at a respectful distance.

"Next morning the dog was missing. Quarterman raised himself up on his elbow when he heard the news and said he must be found at any cost; he was worth $500. The men started out, of course, searched the stables, boathouses, swamp and fields clear down to the water's edge, whistled and called—did all the things you do when a dog is lost, but no setter. Everybody wondered why he ran away; some said one thing, some another. I knew why. He had gone off in search of a gentleman."

"Did Quarterman's leg get well?" ventured Lonnegan.

"I don't know, and I don't care. I left the next morning."

"Did he get his dog back?" asked Boggs.

"Not while I was there. I could have told him where to look for him, but I didn't. I saw him on a porch with some children about a week after that, when I was driving through a neighboring village, but I didn't send word to Quarterman. I had too much respect for the dog.

"Come here, old fellow, and let me hug you," and Mac took the great head of the St. Bernard between his warm hands, and the two snuggled their cheeks together.

"The Terrier as Anxious as a Mother Over Her Child"

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Philadelphia Lawyers

THE chance witticism of a reporter lately threw a searchlight on Mayor Weaver's anti-graft war. If Philadelphia lawyers are as shrewd as the proverb makes them out, he asked, why was it necessary to come all the way to New York for Mr. Root—who could not be expected to be familiar with the courts and statutes of the City of Brotherly Love?

The Mayor astutely declined to answer the question; but one of his friends let the cat out of the bag. The fight, he hinted, bade fair to be carried so far that, in a community where political influence means so much, no lawyer with a desire for political and corporate preferment could be relied on to wage it to the uttermost. In the land of the blind, according to the French proverb, the one-eyed people are kings; but in any city, asleep or awake, those timorous lawyers of Philadelphia would get the credit for having a keen eye to the main chance.

The obstacle to the success of the crusade upon which the forces of righteousness are engaged is what Calhoun once called the cohesive power of public plunder. Nothing could more clearly indicate that power than Mayor Weaver's little pilgrimage. But, by the same token, it looks very much as if he were on the track of its ultimate solvent. Not only Philadelphia lawyers are shrewd!

The Desire to Win

TO THOSE who have known college athletics from the inside, Mr. Needham's revelation of the methods pursued by many of our foremost universities in maintaining their prestige is accurate, judicious and—familiar as it seems to be—startling to the layman; but the denunciations which it has evoked from the press are often pitiably wide of the mark. After half a century of evolutionary thought, it is a little late to brand as infamous "the desire to win." The decadence of British sportsmanship, and, by the same token, of British military prowess, has come through nothing else than an abatement of the sense of the importance of excelling in all things small as well as great.

As normally felt in our colleges the ambition to excel in manly contests is one of the most valuable means of developing character. The desire for knowledge and the love of literature take possession of a very small proportion of our young men as an absorbing passion. One smiles involuntarily at the suggestion that they ever could do so. Deeds of strength, courage and skill, on the other hand, arouse in us all a deep-seated racial instinct. Whether one passion is on a lower plane than the other may be questioned, and, in either case, does not greatly matter. The chief thing is that, whatever the occasion, our young men should, in their formative years, feel to the last pulse the passionate intensity of all life which is worthy of the name. The rigid sacrifice of personal indulgence which the college man calls training, and the faculty of working humbly yet no less eagerly with others for a common end which he calls team-play, are the virtues that make all the difference, let us say, between Russia and Japan. In no other single feature of modern life are the patriotic virtues so thoroughly realized as in the honester rivalries of intercollegiate athletics.

The imported and the supported athlete is a perversion of this patriotic spirit, and he is an evil in the body athletic because he defeats its legitimate and normal end. The wrong he works is precisely the same as that wrought by the mercenary soldier. Temporary victory is won at the cost of the vitality and integrity of the state. You cannot hire other people to be virtuous for you. Every paid athlete discourages scores of honest undergraduates from the struggle for excellence which, in any deep sense, is so much better than excellence itself. Every victory won by unfair means lowers the general tone of a college by teaching it to accept with joy the shadow in place of the substance.

The vice of our college athletics is that of the American nation at large—not the desire to win, but the determination to win at any cost.

The Spirit of Japan

IT IS natural to us—but is it quite intelligent?—to laugh Admiral Togo's address to the Mikado down the winds as a superstitious and sentimental ancestor worship. "That we gained a success beyond our expectations is due to the brilliant virtue of your Majesty, and to the protection of the spirits of your Imperial ancestors, and not to the action of any human being"—to say nothing of the superhuman torpedo! Deep students of things Oriental assure us that what is generally called the worship of ancestors is more accurately described as a worship of the continuity of human life, being also expressed in devotion to posterity—an ideal which, mystical and false though it often is in its superficial manifestations, is in spirit identical with the ripest teachings of the modern science of life.

The inscrutable forces which have evolved the marvelous human creature out of the primordial protoplasmic cell, and are driving it ever forward and upward, care little for the individual. In many species one parent or both die in giving birth to their offspring; in all, the process of reproduction is painful and perilous in the extreme. Love is the handmaid of death, and their joint function in the magnificently cruel epic of existence is to feed the ever living and increasing flame of life. This is the idea with which Tennyson was laboring when he wrote of Nature:

> So careful of the type she seems,
> So careless of the single life.

Our personal ambitions and enjoyments—the little busy deeds of hand and brain—are as nothing when compared to the invincible spirit of past ages—the life which abides in us for a brief space, only to be handed on down the centuries like the fire in the torch race of old, which consumed the living brand that bore it. The Mikado being the nation, it is his ancestors who made Japan what it is. To the flagrant and illogical individualism of modern European civilization the Oriental opposes a spirit of race patriotism, to which death for the glory of the past and the good of times to come is the happiest of consummations.

Let us not minimize the genius of our own people. Without the science and invention of our Occidental individualism, the Orient would still be sleeping in the torpor of the Dark Ages. Of all the forces of which Japan is making such magnificent use she has invented not one. But neither has she fallen into the sentimental love of life, the selfish love of graft, which has thus far prevented us from applying our inventions to the common good of the race. In our self-centred utilitarianism we laugh at the claims of posterity, asking what posterity has ever done for us. "After us the deluge!" is the commonest of bywords. A true jest, according to the Scotch saying, is no jest at all.

One newspaper writer has gravely suggested that our only hope of escaping the yellow peril lies in introducing the spirit of graft along with battleships and sanitation. But it is to be feared that not even a Philadelphia education would quite pervert the Mikado's people—and Philadelphia has reformed! That recourse failing, the only alternative is to educate ourselves to a stricter biology of existence. With ancestor worship as a religion we can, perhaps, dispense; but, if we are to hold our own, we must learn to supplement our eager struggles for self-realization with a larger reverence for the legacies of the past and a spirit of unflinching self-sacrifice in times of need, to the welfare of ages to come.

Waiters, Tips and Authors

MR F HOPKINSON SMITH does not impress one as an altogether satanic character, but in pleading the virtues of gratuities given to waiters he is pretty clearly engaged in "making the worse appear the better reason." The tip, he says, is a means of showing kindness to those in less fortunate circumstances—a seed from which spring the fine flowers of affection between man and man. These are the words of a lazy optimist who believes that all is for the best in this best of all possible worlds—the words of one enamored of the rôle of that long obsolete personage, the grand seigneur; or, to use a less lofty comparison, of the beneficent slaveholder of more recent times. How far his attitude is removed from modern life may be seen at a glance by comparing it with the sense of human sympathy and fellowship expressed by such men as Walt Whitman.

Would Mr. Smith be willing to return to those times when men of letters dedicated their books to the rich and the great in terms of submissive adoration, obviously colored by the glitter of gold to come? Shakespeare paid his tribute of dedicatory praise to the young and flighty Earl of Southampton, and is said to have founded his fortune on the cash equivalent received therefor. Sturdy Ben Jonson was not too sturdy to crook the pregnant hinges of his knees in a similar cause. Even the Great Bear, Samuel Johnson, to whom fell the credit of shattering forever an immemorial custom of literary servility, emitted his surly growls only after he had long and often cooled his heels in vain in the antechamber of the Earl of Chesterfield. But to-day even the humblest poetaster stands on his own two legs.

The true test of Mr. Smith's position is whether he can imagine himself holding forth an expectant palm to plutocrats and presidents.

The man who gives a tip, as Howells remarked in a previous discussion of this much-vexed question, forfeits his manly rectitude, together with sundry small coins, in exchange for the servility of a fellow man. For all the glamour of kindliness with which a sentimental soul may invest the act, it remains only that. There are very few of us, it is true, who do not give tips. As matters now stand, to refuse to give them would work a very real wrong to those dependent upon them. But it is far better to see the ugly act as it is than to pretend to make a virtue of it.

When waiters, as a class, have the ignominy of their position brought home to them, they will unite to demand a more equitable basis of hire. One very intelligent wielder of apron and napkin has aptly suggested that all possible virtues of the present system would be preserved, and none of its vices, if every waiter were to receive a minimum fixed wage—say seven dollars a week—and in addition a fixed proportion—five per cent. or so—of all his sales.

Vacation in Convention

FROM now on until the cool weather we shall be having conventions of workers of all kinds at convenient places in all parts of the civilized world. Conventions local, sectional, national, international—conventions of farmers, artisans, lawyers, bankers, railway men, manufacturers, doctors, teachers, editors, mothers, fraternal orders. The regular vacations of a great majority of our active citizens will be spent in convention.

As the care of the health ought to be and can be a matter of every day in the year, and as the idle vacation is usually spent in anything but a soundly healthful way, the new system is altogether well. The important thing about a vacation—when hard work has really earned it—is a complete change. And what could be a completer change than that from looking at one's life occupation in the close, strained way of the daily routine to looking at it in the relaxed, easy, broad way of the convention of all pursuing the same vocation?

Is This Wild-Cat Insurance?

BUSINESS men naturally detest worthless insurance. It is a sheet-anchor of lath, a rock to lean on that turns out to be mere pasteboard, a haven of refuge that tumbles down on the refugee's head. It is as bad as a rotten bank, or a watchdog that licks the robber's hand.

Thus to detect and demolish wild-cat insurance is always a valuable service to commerce. In view of certain deplorable events that have happened of late on the other side of the world—especially in and about the Korean straits—there is ground for suspicion that the very greatest insurance scheme in the world is a mere rotten wild-cat which takes in all the premiums anybody offers and never pays a cent of losses. A commission should be appointed to investigate it.

The ablest statesmen have long held that a great national armament, especially a great navy, was justified on purely business grounds because it afforded a splendid insurance against the losses of war. Probably it would take a more eloquent insurance agent than ever yet came down the pike to make that view look convincing at St. Petersburg just now.

Russia faithfully paid up her premiums, to the amount of a hundred and fifty million dollars or so, for the Pacific and Baltic fleets, and she now finds that the more insurance she took out the heavier was her loss.

Great Britain was by far the most heavily insured nation in the world, but the Boers seemed not to know it. So she lost about half a billion in the little conflagration that they touched off. For that matter, Japan's policy was in perfect form, but she has been borrowing herself blind for a year to meet war losses.

Billions are invested in this insurance scheme, but there is certainly something the matter with it somewhere.

Nights with the Old-Time Players

By Rebecca Harding Davis

When the Old "Grand Manner" was More Than a Tradition

Respectable Citizens Unhitched the Horses from Her Carriage and Dragged it Through the Streets

IN THE old days William West Betty, a precocious boy of twelve, came from the provinces, and a mob at once declared that he combined the power of Kean and all the Kembles, male and female, put together. London christened him the Infant Roscius. No theatre in the city could contain the crowds that rushed to see him. They filled Drury Lane, when he played there, to the doors, and massed themselves in the squares patiently waiting for hours to catch a glimpse of him as his carriage passed. The House of Commons adjourned in order that members should be in time to hear him declaim:

My name is Norval. On the Grampian hills
My father feeds his flock——

the pathos of which was declared to be superhuman

Meanwhile, Mrs. Siddons and Kean were playing to empty houses

The Infant Roscius, my father said, was only a pert little lad with a well-trained voice and an unusually good memory. He grew into a stout, stupid young man, unfit for even subordinate parts.

Another wonder, entitled The Man Ape, soon beguiled London from its worship of the boy prodigy. Some cheap play was put upon the stage, in the midst of which a man dressed like a baboon swung himself out of one of the boxes up to the pillars, and thence to the roof, chattering and bowing to the enraptured audience. The play then stopped. It was only the background for his tricks. His success lasted for several weeks, during which time no attention whatever was given by the public to the kings and queens of tragedy.

Should not the verdict of this so capricious London be received with doubt, even when it pronounced judgment on these great monarchs of the stage?

One actor, however, of whose genius there can be little doubt, was George Frederick Cooke, who played Iago with the elder Kemble and Macbeth with Mrs. Siddons. He was a tall man with a perpetual sardonic grin upon a face the ugliness of which was always startling and novel. On the rare occasions when he was sober his power over his audience was complete; they laughed and wept at his will. But these lapses from drunkenness became more rare with each year. Again and again the curtain had to be rung down on his besotted, jabbering folly. We all have heard of the time when this was done in Liverpool The insulted audience broke into a storm of hisses. The next moment, Cooke, pale and sober, appeared at the footlights.

"You hiss me! Hiss George Frederick Cooke?" he thundered. "The people of Liverpool! Why, there is not a brick in your devoted city which is not cemented with the blood of a murdered slave!"

Another story of his pluck and sharp wit is perhaps not so familiar. While he was playing an engagement in New York he was dunned for five hundred dollars one afternoon by a creditor who proved to be altogether too strenuous to be wheedled or put off

"Come on, then," said Cooke, and led the way to a neighboring pawnbroker's shop.

"My good man, I put myself in pawn," he said. "Lock me up in a closet. Don't let me out. Give this man the ticket. Now"— to the creditor —"take it to my manager and tell him that George Frederick Cooke is locked up here in pawn for five hundred dollars. Don't be uneasy. In an hour's time the curtain must ring up. You'll get your money."

He did get it, and when the excited manager—his audience waiting—drove furiously to the pawn-shop he found Cooke locked up safely behind the counter, sound asleep, and—being locked up—sober and ready for work.

My own recollections of the stage began late, of necessity, as our churchgoing village had a contempt for "show-people" of all kinds, and hence they avoided us. A famous singer—Russell, I think—once made a one-night's stand with us, hiring the courthouse for his concert. Hospitality forced us all to go and applaud, but we glanced at each other with furtive smiles when he sang The Land of the Leal, and

A southerly wind and a cloudy sky
Proclaim it a hunting morning.

And when we came out we said that the man should hear Molly Canby sing those songs once, to find out what there really was in them. "Though, of course," we decided, "music given for money naturally could not have the quality of that made by a gentlewoman for the pleasure of her friends."

The next event in the shape of an entertainment was the arrival at the wharf of a steamboat, the cabin of which was declared to be an exact reproduction of the Hall in the old State House in Philadelphia as that room was on the day when the Declaration of Independence was signed There were the Signers, life-size wax figures all dressed like Quakers, seated in rows. There was John Hancock on a platform, pen in hand, just about to make the well-known flourish. Jefferson stood beside him, smiling blandly, and Washington in the centre with his drawn sword extended ready for use. He, too, smiled—in fact, they all had precisely the same fat, bland face, like so many twins, and smiled as if they had just eaten a good dinner, instead of pledging their lives, fortunes and sacred honor in sight of a dangling rope and a gibbet.

Even the most scrupulous of our citizens went to this show, which was declared to be a stimulant to patriotism But we came away from it beset with doubts. Could the immortal Signers really have all looked like the same fat sheep?

The boat slowly made its way down the Ohio River, the Missouri and the Mississippi, stopping at every town and village. It was the first show, except the circus, which traveled through the country, and a clamor of excitement followed in its wake. It had no success, however, in New Orleans, that metropolis having long boasted of theatres, both French and English. We good orthodox people watched complacently from afar its wicked goings-on, very much as the captive Jews regarded mighty Babylon reeling to its fall

Later, P. T. Barnum brought Jenny Lind to the town for a night. She sang in the Methodist church. Such of us as could command five dollars bought tickets and went to hear her.

At that time, when the best butter sold at ten cents a pound and chickens at a quarter a pair, you will easily perceive that five dollars were more than twenty would be now. Barnum was berated as a shameless extortioner. But what could you do? This foreign woman must be taught that the gentry of America had as fine an appreciation of music and as full pockets as the European nobility. Besides, there was a rumor that she had given up singing in opera from religious scruples. That was a noble sacrifice! She must be upheld in it. So we filled the church, thrilled with a certain pride because our village was taking part in the excitement which then raged in the seaboard cities. Jenny Lind was the first great diva who visited this country, and before she sang a note in it the country went mad with delight, not at the music, but at the honor done the nation. Respectable citizens of New York unhitched the horses from her carriage and dragged it through the streets; others, dressed as waiters, carried her breakfast into her apartment, cherishing the quarters that she gave them as precious legacies for their children. Marvelous tales were eagerly circulated about her piety, her generosity and other virtues. But Barnum's cupidity was everywhere denounced One night, in New York, she sang the Song of the Bird, in which the thrush is asked why it sings, and replies, in effect, that it is because the sun is warm and God is good and it is happy. The diva's voice for a while filled the dome with the warbling of exquisite bird-notes thrilling with joy; then, clasping her hands, she cried in rapture: "I know not why I'm singing!"

A voice in the gallery shouted: "I know darned well why you're singing: it's for five dollars a head!"

One kindly act of hers I do not think has ever been told in print. While she was in Philadelphia she went alone one rainy day to the old Swedish Church of Gloria Dei, the mission founded by Gustavus Adolphus. She was veiled and took her place in one of the free back pews. Presently, when they sang the Gloria in Excelsis, the voice which was then the wonder of the world took up the strain. No wonder that the poor folk in the pews stood dumb and thought that an angel had come among them. In the poor-box at the door that day was found an offering which warmed many a cold hearth and heart through the winter.

We village folk were amazed and awed by the power of her voice; there was a tender human quality in it, too, which brought the tears to our eyes. Still, I am not sure but that, for real solid gratification, we did not at heart prefer our own Molly Canby and her guitar.

A few years before the Civil War an enterprising citizen who had visited the East, and there "conversed with men and learned their ways," fitted up a real theatre for us. It was a big room over a flour warehouse. There were circular rows of benches, a stage with a curtain—which always hitched half-way up—two scenes of mountains and trees and two of a King's Court, gold chairs and throne—all complete. The first play that I ever saw was Richard the Third, given in this house by Edwin Booth, who had been stranded in New Orleans, and was working his way up North. This was his third performance.

Where he had picked up his company I do not know. It chiefly consisted of two men, who, after we had grown familiar with them as Hastings and Buckingham, and had wept to know that their heads were taken off, appeared with cheerful celerity as Citizens, then as Murderers, and next as Ghosts. Finally, they constituted Richmond's entire army, dodging in and out, making the forest alive with shouts, gibberings and crowings. The Lady Anne, our first glimpse at royalty, disappointed us. Her court robe was of flowered window-curtain stuff, and she had a cold in the head and sniffled while she invoked curses on Richard. Booth, too, was a poor presentment of that "hunchback toad of hell." The humped pad in his coat between his shoulders could not disguise the grace of his slight figure, and the face of age and vice, which should have been a visible curse on the world, was that of a beautiful boy beaming with all sweet and fine thoughts.

Having, against his father's will, made his way on to the stage in this journey, Edwin Booth was kept upon it by a shrewd manager in spite of the angry parental protests. His success was sudden and great. Much of it, no doubt, was due to his singular personal beauty. For years afterward, women of all ages packed the theatres in every city when he played Romeo or Hamlet, and were the more fervent in their enthusiasm because his devotion to his young wife was well known.

Soon after Booth's visit to our theatre it was turned into a prison for rebels captured by General Rosecrans, then in possession of the town. They were watched by a Home

Editor's Note—This is the second of a series of articles on the Old-time Players. The third will be published in an early number.

Guard of old fellows who were out of work, all of them over sixty. They used to sit and doze on a bench outside of the building, awakening now and then to sing a Methodist hymn, or to shoot at any of the prisoners who came near the windows. So the old theatre at last gave us genuine farce and tragedy.

After I came to the East to live I grew more familiar with plays and players, and saw something of the best and the worst of both.

Edwin Booth, after his success, soon made radical changes in the setting of the stage. Before his day it was poor and cheap to a degree which the present race of playgoers do not comprehend. In the Philadelphia Academy of Music, for instance, the same venerable, dingy scenes were set for opera during two generations, and in that time the same women played the small parts in the same gowns. We all knew them and the gowns well—Josephine, who was tall and lean, and Anna, who was short and stout, and all the others. Night after night they came to us as Court ladies, and Dutch peasants, and Greek priestesses. I used to wonder what became of them when they were not frisking about under those great dusty caryatides. Did they live in houses, and eat chops and drink coffee like other women?

When Repression Wasn't Art

This was forty years ago. We had a few great actors then: as many as to-day, but certainly the rank and file who took the inferior parts could not compare with the same class now upon the stage. The young playgoer, now, who has always been used to the natural methods of acting, the simplicity and quiet of Jefferson and Nat Goodwin Maude Adams and Mrs Fiske—which is copied carefully by their subordinates—cannot imagine the falsity, the cheapness of the dramatic art of that earlier day. The ingénue invariably dawdled languidly to the footlights, clad in white and blue ribbons, languishing and lisping; the soubrette skipped in, her hands thrust into the pockets of a white apron. All of the women talked in a high falsetto and laughed with just three notes—He-he-he!—precisely alike, as no human being on earth ever was known to talk or to laugh. If these subordinates attempted pathos or anger the tradition of the old grand manner of Siddons and Kean still held them, and they mouthed and writhed and squealed in feigned, petty passion, too pitiful even for ridicule.

A little woman from the West, Maggie Mitchell, who personated an elfish, half-demented child, set the example of sincerity and simplicity and won the hearts of all playgoers.

Shortly after this time the Black Crook startled and shocked the country. Before that date most managers presented a ballet with each play. But the dance came between the acts and was short and usually tolerably decent. The long, sweeping skirts which Taglioni wore to her ankles had vanished from the stage with the present century, but something of the charm of her modesty still clung to the spinning *dansseuse*. The Black Crook put an end to that. I have been told that it originally was a tragedy, the failure of which ruined its manager. At that critical moment he fell in with a troupe of dancers also stranded in New York. He turned the tragedy into a musical extravaganza, set the women to spinning among colored lights and began palaces, and then stormed the country with unprecedented success. After the advent of the Black Crook *danseuses* were gradually withdrawn from the legitimate drama and Shylock and Macbeth were no longer forced to wait outside in the breathless crisis of the tragedy while the poor little *figurantes* spun and twisted before the footlights.

Most of the dancers of that time supposed that the public yearned not for the poetry of motion but its difficulties. They leaped, writhed, walked on their toes and revolved like wheels, until the bones of the spectator ached in sympathy. I remember only two of these women with any pleasure. They were the Rigl sisters, Betty and Emily. They attempted no tricks to dazzle; they seemed to float in the air, as if blown by the music. I believe they were successful and settled down in middle age, as so many actors do, to be thriving, energetic farmers.

But to come back to the prominent players of that day. There were still a few worthy imitators of the Siddons manner left upon the stage. Chief among these was Edwin Forrest, who by this time was a huge, gouty, ill-conditioned old man. I saw him act but once, in Richelieu. He was sick and weak, and the play halted feebly along until the famous passage where he defends his niece with the upraised cross. Then the terrific magnetic power of the man flashed out as he invoked the awful curse of Rome. At the words your very soul quailed within you. You saw, as did the terrified wretches crouching on the stage, Rome—Rome!

The effect lasted but for a moment. But I never have seen such an effect produced upon the stage by any actor—except, indeed, Salvini, the greatest of them all.

Forrest's private life had been such as to leave him friendless in his old age. He lived in Philadelphia in a stately house on Broad Street which he had filled with costly pictures and books. He had artistic tastes, but no training. I was told by men who knew him that he was coarse and vulgar in both his character and manners. His divorce case had dragged his offensive private life before the public, and he felt his social ostracism bitterly. He was once present at an auction where a service of fine Sèvres was put up for sale. Some one advised him to bid for it.

"Why should I buy it?" he said. "No gentleman ever dines with me!"

He had the temper of an animal. I saw him once in a railway-car near the city. He sat with his gouty foot stretched out across the passage. A mischievous boy of six came up to it, eyed it thoughtfully a minute, and then, with a shout, jumped on it with both feet. Forrest's yell of agony and rage was quite as effective as his curse of Rome. The boy was dragged away and his life saved.

Edwin Forrest left the bulk of his fortune to found a home for retired actors. It is a large, beautiful house in Holmesburg, surrounded by orchards and gardens, and there, to-day, a few old dignitaries of the stage sit, and talk over their past triumphs, and wait the signal for the last fall of the curtain. Whatever the faults of the great actor may have been, this, the closing act of Forrest's life, was most human and kindly.

Cushman as Meg

Charlotte Cushman was also popular about that time. She was a tall woman, built like a man, and with a voice of masculine power, which was, however, capable of great tenderness and pathos. Her Meg Merrilies was as unique and fine a conception of an eccentric character as is Maude Adams' 'Op o' my Thumb. But when you went to see Miss Cushman play Lady Macbeth or Queen Catharine, you only found again Meg, equipped with a crown or a dagger. The snarls or sobs of the crazed nurse were wholly out of place in the scheming murderess and the much-injured queen. Personally, Miss Cushman was a good, honest and most womanish woman, working hard for her family, and honoring her profession and herself by that work.

Charles Fechter was another celebrity who then strutted his brief hour upon the stage—though, to be just, Fechter did not strut at all. He played each part as he conceived it, with no regard to tradition. Hence he pranced or skipped or turned somersaults according to his own mood, but there never was any affectation of dignity in him. The public then were divided in their allegiance to the Hamlet of Booth and the Hamlet of Fechter. Booth, with his delicate features, his grace, and quiet, noble bearing, was the ideal Prince of Denmark. His welcome to the Players was, I am sure, the first time that the part of a simple gentleman giving the courtesies of ordinary life—the most difficult of all parts—was fitly played on any stage.

Fechter, a stout, florid young fellow, dressed in colors as Hamlet wearing a yellow curly wig. His face was red and fat, he spoke with a German accent, he slapped his thigh as he rolled out "To be or not to be" with tremendous gusto. Nothing could be more absurd than this presentment of the melancholy Dane. He was not Shakespeare's Hamlet. But he was a stout young Dutchman in sore trouble, and your heart ached for him—the tears came to your eyes. For years afterward you remembered him—and his trouble, and both always were real to you. Fechter retired from the stage while yet a young man. He bought a farm in Maryland, hid himself there, and soon after died.

The comedian, John Sleeper Clarke, belonged to that day. As an artist, he had as much personal magnetism as Fechter; as a man, unlike the Dutch Hamlet, he was sober and clean-minded, a tender husband and father and a most generous friend. But few men are sent by the Powers above into the world on that most kindly of errands—to make it laugh. The world usually pays them largely in gratitude and affection. Clarke counted his friends in every civilized country.

He was a large, florid man, with reddish hair and blue, protruding eyes. I saw him first when the Civil War was at its height, when the minds of men and women were sick unto death with the long-nursed hate and fury. The day had brought depressing news; the evening we meant to spend in listening to appeals for slaughter and more slaughter from Wendell Phillips and other vehement Abolitionists. By chance we strayed instead into the Chestnut Street Theatre, where Clarke was playing Major DeBoots. It was simply fun—clean fun; you fell into wild paroxysms of laughter. Why, we had forgotten that there was such a thing in the world as fun or laughter! We came out happy and sane again, full of kind thoughts of Abolitionists and rebels. The spell of that night never left me. I always thought of Clarke and Waddilove and DeBoots as missionaries in the world preaching good-will and happiness.

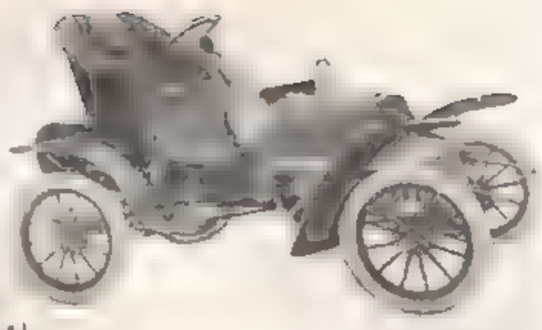
Fishes that are Racers

STUDY of the speed of fishes is embarrassed by unavoidable difficulties. It is not possible, as with birds, to set up tall poles at intervals of a quarter of a mile, and, with the help of stop-watches, time them as they go by. Nevertheless, recent investigation of the subject goes to show that the mackerel, if not the champion racer of the briny deep, comes pretty near to carrying off the honors. Unquestionably it travels sometimes as fast as an express train at high speed—say, at the rate of sixty, or possibly seventy, miles an hour.

Other things being equal, the larger the fish, the faster it swims—just as the huge steamship is able to travel at a speed much greater than the little harbor tug. Undoubtedly the energy employed by a fish of great size, such as a thirty-foot shark, when traveling at its best gait, is something tremendous. An ordinary tug, which represents a maximum of energy in a minimum of bulk, utilizes about two hundred horse-power. Of course, it is only a guess, but it would not seem to be over the mark to suppose that a seventy-foot whale makes use of five hundred horse-power when it propels its huge bulk through the water at a rate of thirty miles an hour. A whale—which is a mammal, and not a fish—might be compared to a freight train if the shark is a rattling all express, but it can beat the fastest "ocean greyhound" in a speed contest.

If there is a fish that can travel faster than a shark, it must be the tarpon, which can probably "hit her up" to the tune of eighty miles an hour, if pressed for time. Generally speaking, it may be said that finny creatures which live near the surface of the sea are swift swimmers, as compared with those that dwell in the depths. Thus the cod, which is a deep-water species, is sluggish and would stand no show at all in a race with the mackerel or herring. These latter, which are distinctively pelagic, depend for their living upon their activity in pursuing agile prey, and they must be quick in their movements in order to escape their own enemies.

If the mackerel were as big as a good-sized shark, it would probably be the speed champion of the ocean. No fish is better shaped for rapid going. Some years ago a yacht builder in New York constructed a sloop with a hull patterned exactly after the underbody of a Spanish mackerel. She was called the Lightning, and, if tradition does not lie, she never was beaten. Like the fish after which she was modeled, she had her greatest breadth of beam forward of amidships—a decidedly novel idea in boat-building. One may say indeed, that all modern water-craft are more or less fishlike in their make-up; yet on the whole it is surprising that marine architects have not striven more earnestly than they have done to obtain hints from Nature's own illustrations of aquatic speed-making principles.



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Literary Folk—Their Ways and Their Work

THE MASTER WORD—A PUZZLE WITHOUT AN ANSWER AND A REVELATION THAT DOES NOT REVEAL.

¶ It is a little difficult to say just what L. H. Hammond—whom one presumes to be a woman—wants to prove in The Master Word (*The Macmillan Company*). The whole tone of the novel is immensely, if not intensely, serious; it is from the first darkly intimated that the author has a revelation in regard to the new race problem and the old mystery of sorrow, but when the reader has finished the book he is still unenlightened.

The scene is cast in the phosphate region of Tennessee. Sudden riches come to one family, the daughter of which is loved by a young neighbor who hesitates, until hurried along by a rifle-shot, to woo a woman wealthier than himself. This girl's mother heroically rears the illegitimate child of her dead husband by a mulatto—a girl who is tragically indisposed toward the blacks and hysterically in love with the young man who wants to marry her white half-sister. The negro vote is bought up by unscrupulous politicians, and the hero, in the end, comes to the conclusion that he must pay a better price than his political opponents. Perhaps the author's revelations were, then, the scarcely novel ones that humble self-sacrifice will atone even for another's sin, and that, in politics, his Satanic Majesty must be fought with sulphur, though how she reconciles these two theories remains a mystery. As for the writing, what is one to say of an author who calmly dismisses a dramatic scene in this wise:

"As they stepped upon the bridge a man on horseback suddenly emerged from behind a tree on the other side of the stream, and fired twice at Bruce's heart. He dropped without a groan, and Jim fell upon his knees beside him, while Simmons, shouldering his smoking rifle, turned coolly back up the plantation road."

In spite of the democratic scorn which her pronouns have for their antecedents, L. H. Hammond's Master Word gives no directions for the unraveling of the Master Knot of human fate. —*R. W. K.*

¶ **MINOR MENTION:** THE DIARY OF "ME" (*Broadway Publishing Company*) is another journal like that by Mr. Plupy Shute. It is not without considerable humor and some truth in its picture of the "human boy," but its author, unlike Judge Shute, has made a mistake in spelling words so much as they sound on the lips of a lad at school as to make their reading difficult for any child of older growth.

¶ THE RECENT ENCOURAGING development of facilities for the study of music in America promises soon to make the records of our countrymen who study music abroad more or less unusual. But that consummation is not yet, and, in the mean time, such a book as An American Girl in Munich (*Little, Brown & Co.*) has value for many music-loving Americans. Mabel W. Daniels, the author, has a naïve style, and her decidedly original impressions of the music which she heard during her studies in Europe are of characteristic interest.

¶ MAURICE BLOOMFIELD, Professor of Sanskrit and Comparative Philology in Johns Hopkins University, has published in the form of a small book his monograph on Cerberus, The Dog of Hades (*The Open Court Publishing Company*), an interesting study in comparative mythology. The subject is not lacking in anticipatory interest to a large class of readers.

¶ THE FIVE SHORT STORIES by Harold MacGrath which are published under the generous title of Enchantment (*The Bobbs-Merrill Company*) belong to the same class as this author's novelette, The Princess Elopes.

They are eminently "light reading"—which means that they will not keep their reader awake nights, and that they propound no problems of social ethics more puzzling than the old one of the way of a maid with a man. Neither is the book a picture of any sort of people who ever lived on sea or land. But it will tide over those inevitable in-between hours of monotony which occur in even the best regulated of vacations. And it will help one to forget the mosquitoes.

¶ THERE ARE ARGUMENTS A-PLENTY in favor of a law restricting every author to that particular field of authorship—one had almost said "authority"—where grows the especial herb on which his or her special talent thrives the best. But no such law has, as yet, found its way clear to the statute-books, and, in the mean time, many an author continues to leap the fence of propriety and good judgment. Thus Mr. Arthur W. Marchmont in A Courier of Fortune (*Frederick A. Stokes Company*). His story is based upon the play of the same name and is nothing more or less than a cloak and sword drama done into book-form.

Undoubtedly, Mr. Marchmont's many admirers will read it—but just as undoubtedly they will end it with a longing to encounter its author once again in that field of modern, if equally marvelous, adventure, to the narration of which his ability as a novelist is best adapted.

¶ THE THESIS THAT RUSSIA is a much misunderstood nation manifestly lies at the bottom of The Case of Russia (*Fox, Duffield & Co.*), a volume made up of several independent contributions by various authors, all either Russian by birth or pro-Russian by sympathy. Thus Alfred Rambaud, French Senator and man of letters, contributes The Expansion of Russia; J. Novicow, of Odessa, offers a psychological study of The Russian People, Vladimer G. Simkovitch, of Columbia University, attempts an interpretation of The Russian Aristocracy; the Reverend Dr. Peter Roberts seeks to explain the Slav, and Dr. Isaac A. Hourwich writes of Russian Religious Sects. As a rule, Russia is here credited with at least 'meaning well," and even her absolutism is treated as a system borrowed from Germany and Asia rather than a native product.

The book, however, is rather small to cover so large a field, and the weight of much that is said is somewhat lessened by a presumption of Russia's strength which has been sadly lessened, in the reader's mind, by certain subsequent events in the Far East.

¶ IT IS UNFORTUNATE for the historical romancer that there were but thirteen States to play a prominent part in the earliest annals of this country. So narrow a field is soon crowded. Vermont, however, remains one of the less noisy corners. Miss Theodora Peck has discriminatingly chosen it for the scene of her story, Hester of the Grants (*Lee, Decker & Co.*). In other particulars the book shows no unusual observation. The heroine is an interesting but not an especially unusual young person for this kind of story, and the story itself is in no wise unusual for that sort of young person.

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The Real Meaning of Conscription

By James Davenport Whelpley

A System Sown in the Pride of the Classes and Reaped in the Sorrow of the Masses

CONSCRIPTION is an ugly word in American ears. It carries with it a mental picture of the cruelties of the draft, and it will be long before the edge of personal freedom is so dulled in the New World that a Government resting upon the people will dare advocate enforced military service. The pride of America is its volunteer army—millions of men now carrying on the trades arts and sciences with no thought of murder in their hearts, but ready at a call to "fall in" for the defense of the colors. Military critics may write themselves into early graves decrying the value of untrained soldiery in a scheme of national defense but the American people will long remain content with what they believe they can do in time of emergency, with the eager and intelligent, though untrained, regiments which would spring into organized life within a fortnight after a call to arms.

It is not so with Europe. There the peoples of the Continent have tithed their lives to the God of War for defense or aggression until such tribute is part of the national existence. In the countries of higher civilization long years of peace, the growth of socialism, the burden of national expenditure and a sentiment of men have taken from enforced military service some of its worst features. Now there are exceptions: the family is not deprived of the breadwinner, only the fittest are sent to the front, the youth who will study until he reaches a certain standard can escape the hardships of the common service, and two years with the active army is the maximum required of any one.

With all these modifications, however, the bald fact that the soldier is a conscript still plays an important part in the national economies. It moulds society, modifies labor conditions, colors the national view, and militarism is either accepted as good, as a necessary evil, or is fought as a curse, according to the different schools of thought. England stands by herself in Europe as a country with a great regular army of over 700,000 men dependent solely upon volunteer enlistment for raw material. If the armaments of Europe continue to grow as they have grown in recent years it will not be long before conscription will be forced upon the English people.

The conscription law of Germany and the method of its enforcement is probably the most scientific and practical application possible of the principle of enforced military service to the life of a great, modern, commercial nation. Changes are made from time to time to meet the demands of public opinion, for the Emperor, to have his imperial way even with his own people, must exercise no mean quality of diplomacy. Thus it is that, although he recently secured legislative sanction to an increase of the cavalry arm, it was also provided that from April 1 of this year the term of enforced service in the infantry, the vast bulk of the army, should be reduced to two years. The term had been three from the beginning of the German Empire, but an increasing supply of human material for conscription, and a decided move on the part of the taxpayers to resist notable increase in military expenditure, have made it safe, and politically expedient as well, to limit the burden.

With a population of less than 60,000,000, the German Empire maintains a regular army of over 600,000 men. The total cost of this army is about $170,000,000, or $287 per annum for each unit. The United States, with a population of nearly 80,000,000, maintains a regular army of 60,000 men at a cost of $87,000,000, or about $1,200 per unit. The German private is fed, clothed, equipped and paid $1.67 per month. The American soldier is fed, clothed, equipped and paid thirteen dollars per month. The food of the German private would soon give rise to a mutiny in an American mess-room. It is plentiful, but coarse and monotonous. The clothing and equipment of the German private are as good as those of the American and make a braver show on parade, but in turn they require more labor to keep them presentable.

The German private enters the service prepared to obey and recognizing his officers as a superior race of human beings by reason of previous class distinctions. Even with this spirit prevalent, the life is hard, for the private is bullied and often actually abused by his superiors in rank. It may be said, however, that the numerous court-martial inquiries into cases of abuse and cruelty in the German army are generally concerned with the actions of the non-commissioned rather than the commissioned officers; with men whom a little brief authority has given free play to unbalanced passion or judgment. A majority of the commissioned officers come from classes in society where stupidity and prejudice are all too common, but where consideration for the inferior in station is a recognized principle.

Twenty years ago there were about 800,000 boy babies born in Germany. Death, emigration and disability so reduced this number that on October 1 last, the date of the annual call for conscripts, about [illegible]000 boys of twenty [illegible] were examined as to their fitness for military service. In round numbers 250,000 of these were then drafted into active service or 600,000 going to the navy. Eighty thousand were drafted into the so-called Ersatz Reserve, a corps established for those who, for some reason or other, are not quite up to the requirements of active service. One hundred thousand were drafted into the "Landsturm," or reserve corps, in which is enrolled all available military material which cannot be utilized in the active army, and several thousand were passed by for the time.

A Huge Surplus

When circumstances are favorable, the Government prefers to defer the draft of a conscript into the active service until he has been fully matured physically. Hence many are not called upon to go into the army until they have reached their twenty-first or twenty-second year. The surplus material now available for military service each year is shown in the fact that at the last draft over 1,250,000 were taken under consideration and less than half a million were finally made into soldiers.

On the first of October following his twentieth birthday the German boy receives notice from the police to report to local headquarters. If he be not exempt for any reason or privileged to perform his military duty in some other way, he is carefully examined and either notified to hold himself in readiness for a later call or absorbed at once into the regular army establishment. There are no training schools. The conscript goes direct from his home to the station of the regiment to which he is assigned. There, for the two years of his service, he not only receives constant military instruction but also performs the small parts of labor of the kind soldiers are called upon to do.

The peasant boy or the laborer's son enters the service awkward, bashful and inexperienced. He comes out of it straight and strong, methodical in his habits, well disciplined and with some idea of what is going on in the world. He has seen much of the Empire in which he lives, has passed in review before crowned heads and spent his hours of leisure wandering about great cities. He may even have been for a time the guard who stands in the sentry-box in the shadow of the great Brandenburg Gate in Berlin, and quietly observed the crush through the towering arches—a traffic which in a single day may include every form of vehicle from the state carriage of his Imperial Majesty to a costermonger's barrow.

Much has been said and written of the good effects of military service upon the life of the German people. The benefits as to the physique and morality of many of the individuals are undoubted, but there are attendant evils which, in the opinion of many patriotic citizens, more than balance the good derived. To straighten up the figure, awaken dormant ideas of a wider life, and to feed the body to a condition of health and strength is beneficial, but to create a vast army of ex-soldiers, fascinated by city life—men who, to satisfy their new ambitions, must achieve some position where a livery can be worn—may be deemed a questionable public policy.

Half the German people are in uniforms. These range from the magnificence of imperial attire to the braid and buttons of a street sweeper. The taste of city life which is given the conscript and the imposing character of his clothes while in the army render a return to farm life distasteful. To escape too sudden a decline in personal importance and impressiveness at the end of his enlistment, he seeks to don the livery of the state employee on railroad, street-car line, police force, or, failing in this, he goes to private employment in the city where no corporate or individual employer is too poor or too unmindful of his own interests not to allow those who serve to bedeck themselves in an amazing livery.

To these positions naturally drift the discharged soldiers, and, meantime, the land goes untilled or the crop unharvested for want of labor. The consequences of this spirit, born of the military service, are many. Paternalism, socialism, Government aid and interference in spheres of life elsewhere regarded as sacred to individual effort, make rapid headway. The soldier looks to the military organization to free him from all individual responsibility. The ex-soldier with this habit deeply rooted seeks as like a refuge as he can find.

The German army in active service now numbers over 600,000 men and the rank and file of the soldiers is always between the ages of twenty and twenty-three years. There are today outside of this regular force serving with the colors, 3,000,000 men between the ages of twenty-one and thirty-eight years who have each served three years in the active army. There are [illegible],000 who are partially instructed and 2,000,000 men who, though they have had no military training because of a constantly increasing surplus of conscripts, are nevertheless enrolled and available should their services be needed. It is needless to say that the German Army Staff does more than merely keep this great army enrolled for it is said that military equipment and emergency stores are always ready for immediate issue to a million men additional to the regular force.

There are 25,000 officers in the German regular army. Conscription has nothing to do with them. The carrying of arms is a popular profession for those whose family traditions would keep them out of trade and whose tastes and abilities do not lie in professional directions. The taxpayers are not heavily burdened, however, to support these officers. The pay of a second lieutenant is about $250 a year, a captain receives only $800, and a major-general commanding an army corps gets only $5,000.

It is interesting to note that the German Government takes cognizance of the fact that these wages are small and that no officer is permitted to marry unless he can show that he is possessed of an income amounting to about $1,000 a year. [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

in the army, but in practice young men of even moderate means can escape a large part of the duty required of the peasant. The modified service lasts but one year and only four weeks of that is spent in the barracks. This single year of intermittent military duty guarantees an officer's commission in the Reserve in case the latter is called into active service. In this manner a class distinction recognized and upon "the common people" is placed the heft of the military burden. It is undemocratic but necessary, for even in a monarchy the people of all classes must be kept fairly well satisfied with their system of government, or empire totters. To enforce the military requirement without distinction would soon work repeal of the law, for the "one-year volunteers" represent the ruling classes.

Ostensibly this one-year service is based upon an intention to avoid interference with scientific, artistic, industrial or commercial training or to prevent undue hardship where a youth is the head of a family or business. Those so privileged must reach a certain educational standard, uniform, equip and board themselves. They can join a regiment of their own choice between their seventeenth and twentieth year and after one year of service are furloughed to the Reserve. The age at which these volunteers are accepted is set as low as seventeen, so that, if desired, the service may be performed before higher educational work is begun.

Class Distinction

That this is class distinction is evident, for it is only those who can afford to educate their children to the requisite standard who can secure for them immunity from the full term of soldiering. Then again, during the one-year service it will cost from $800 to $1000 to clothe, equip and feed the boy. This is far more surplus money than is possessed by the average family in Germany or any other land. Of the 500,000 young men available for military duty this year about 10,000, or two per cent., were able to choose this method of fulfilling their obligation.

Over a million boy babies were born in Germany last year, and nineteen years from now there will be about 800,000 young men to draw upon for military duty, unless, in the mean time, the nations have disarmed or conscription has been abolished, neither event being probable. Germany has to-day not the largest but the best-equipped, most concentrated and most effectively organized army in the world, and, with her Reserve, the military resources of the country are greater than those of any other nation. There is no other prospect than that this position will be maintained for many years to come, and even more emphatically than at present.

From a military point of view nothing could be more desirable than the present system, but from a social point of view it is a serious question whether the very perfection of the military arm is not secured by a sacrifice of many qualities necessary to the highest civil and economic development. If the individual character is thus rendered less valuable to the State, the system will in time fall by its own weight, unless changes are gradually made which will modify the present militarism of the German life. Ask a German whether or not he believes in conscription and he will tell you that it is "a necessary evil."

The Social-Democrat will denounce the system as iniquitous, but he would have the German nation disarm entirely, and this is not considered as among the possibilities by the few who rule and the many who take pride and profit in the commanding position of their country. Surrounded by powerful nations, all of them jealous, none friendly at heart, Germany cannot safely yield a man from her army nor a ship from her line unless her natural foes decrease their armed strength in proportion. If she did it would be but a short time before aggression upon her borders and insolence abroad would bring her humiliation at the hands of the erstwhile humiliated. This is the real reason for Germany's great military establishment, the real reason why every citizen must be a man at arms, the real reason why the German people endure conscription and carry the heavy burden of a great national armament.

On the other hand, though the Emperor may possibly cast longing eyes upon neighboring territory, or indulge in fanciful dreams of great German colonies in Africa or South America, the mass of the people of this intelligent, sober and industrious nation ask but for peace with what they now have, and they consent to give of the best years of their lives and the earnings of a later period that this may be guaranteed. Conquest of foreign trade, regardless of the flag that floats over it, is the only form of conquest the people of Germany desire. No nation is more persistent, more intelligent or more scientific in pushing trade abroad — and prosperity has come at home in proportion as this trade has extended its influence. To court a war which would disorganize and destroy what has only so recently been secured and which would check the present rapid expansion would be contrary to the German character. No people have a stronger developed love of home and fatherland, but it is a sentiment more local than national. To think imperially is, not yet at least, a requisite of full patriotism; the Empire is too young for imperial pride to have become a strong factor in German character.

Millions of Socialists

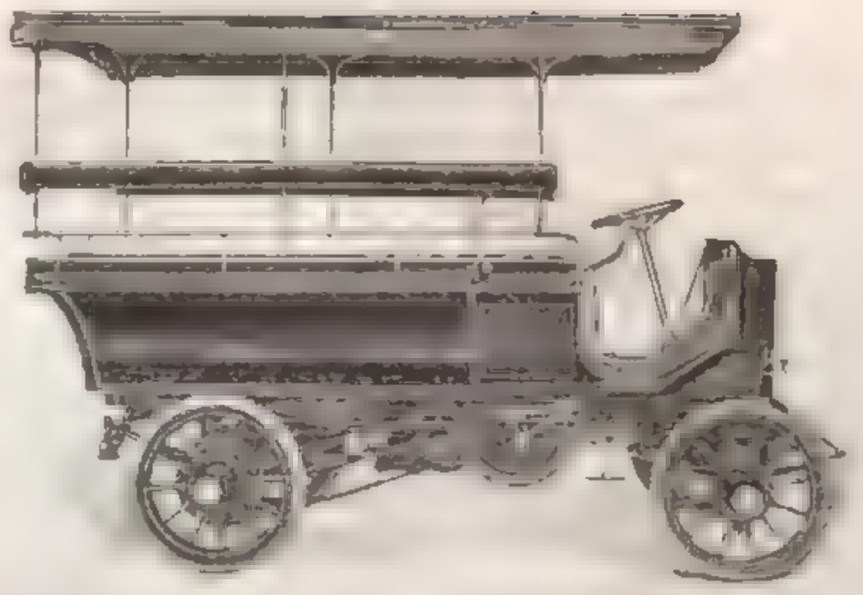
There are three million avowed Social-Democrats in Germany, but this is far from representing the full number of those who are in sympathy with democratic thought. There is possible suggestion for prophecy in the freedom with which, in the sanctuary of each German home of the so-called "middle class," monarchy is patronized, republicanism advocated, and encroachments upon the rights of the people jealously noted and thoughtfully and intelligently discussed and resisted.

It is here that conscription and the whole military system find their real enemies. In one family, perhaps, a boy has gone to a two-years service when he could ill be spared. Mothers who would give their all for their country in time of war see no necessity for heart-breaks in time of peace. In another family, perhaps the mothers and daughters lead frugal lives, and the younger brothers go without many things, so that the oldest son may be a "one-year volunteer" instead of a common soldier.

It is not upon the humblest or upon the highest in the social scale that the real burden of conscription falls. It is upon the great middle class, the real people of a country, those who do the work and pay the bills of the nation. Germany is a country of these people. Aristocracy of blood is but a mere incident in the national life and of comparatively small importance. The aristocracy of accomplishment, of learning and of art constitutes the real "class" of the nation, and it springs from wide and generous sources. If conscription were submitted by referendum to these people it would disappear, and such a referendum is only deferred by ever making conscription less obnoxious.

To apply a system of conscription fairly and justly, regardless of social status or wealth, to a civilized people of to-day would be an impossibility, for they would not have it. It only stands now in civilized Europe by strength of tradition, inherited custom, class distinctions and lack of initiative to pronounce its doom. It could only be adopted in England because of the existence of a ruling class, and even then only in such undemocratic form as to provide escape from its real hardships for all except those without position, money, influence or education.

The police have an eye on a German boy from the day of his birth. The German merchant looks askance at the youth seeking employment who has not served his time in the army. Should the German subject leave his native land without performing military duty he cannot return without fear, unless he has alienated his allegiance or is prepared to yield the tribute of his maturer years to service in the German barracks. The "man with the gun" sits by every German hearth. He tempers the joy of parentage, complicates the problems of life, and adds to the burden of existence in a hundred ways. The brave show of the Emperor and his troops tickles the eye and rouses the martial spirit of the people. The crowd cheers and the half-grown lad with other ambitions as yet unawakened thrills with dreams of a military future. It is in the quiet of the home, maybe the cottage of the fields, or the tall buildings of the cities, that the real tragedy is enacted. Here it is that the sad tribute is paid to the "Man on Horseback" who guides the destinies of Europe.



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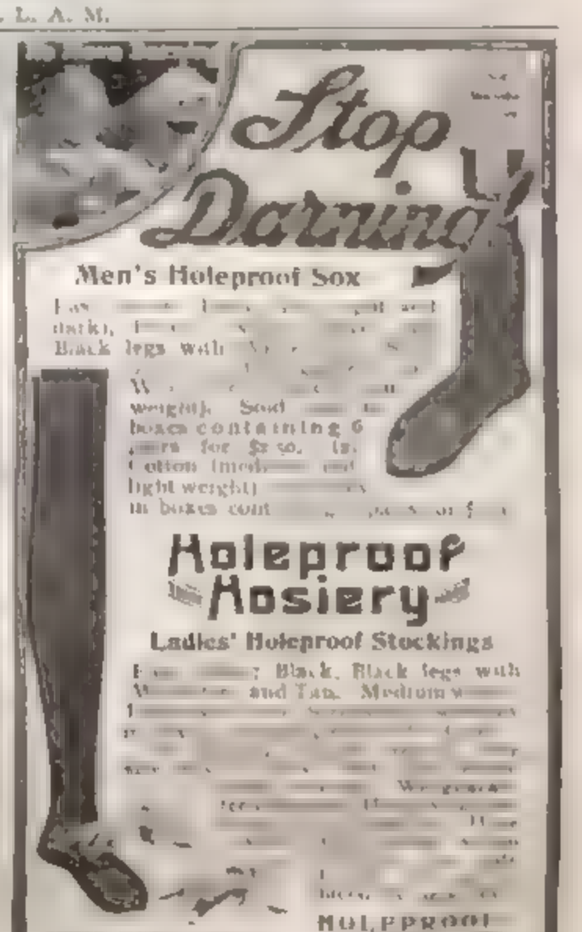

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The Lady and the Ladder

(Continued from Page 5)

Now, Miss Lester not only knew the Lake Drive people but was even said to have been in a box with a grand lady at the opera in New York—though this report was unauthenticated. *Her* mother had *not* cared for crazy-quilts, nor had *her* father built on Drexel Boulevard. She was in society in Chicago, if any one ever was, and to Pauline's ears it had come that she enjoyed similar privileges in Washington, New York, possibly even London. The family had never been enormously rich, but in the early days when social position in the new community had been to have for the taking, Mrs. Lester had grasped it firmly, while Henry T. had presumably sat comfortably by the sitting-room grate in his carpet-slippers and Emmeline had indulged in whatever folly of the needle took the place in those early days of the later crazy-quilt mania. They had not foreseen the time when a "position in society" in every town in the country would be a thing of mystic and incalculable value, when the new democracy of the West would invent classifications that were not needed, and set its silly newspapers to the task of making every one a snob.

Pauline, the product of the new conditions, raged at the injustice her parents had done her, and Miss Alma Lester became to her like a red rag to a bull. The bitterness of it all was increased by the fact that, in the dark ages preceding the Great Fire, Henry T. Whiting and Lawrence A. Lester had been partners in an enterprise which proved to be the beginning of both their fortunes. In those days, Henry T. and Emmeline had a more established position than the younger Lawrence, and it was at Emmeline's first evening party in the West Adams Street house that Mrs. Lester, a young bride, met the *beau monde* of the day. Since then the Whitings had faded away, through their own neglect, into social obscurity, while Mrs. Lester—but Pauline could not think of it calmly. She felt that she could hate both Mrs. and Miss Lester, yet—oh, the degradation of it!—she must catch hold of them, cling to them—if they would let her.

Pauline had rushed up to Alma with the utmost cordiality one day in Rome when Miss Lester had been talking with some friends in the palmroom of the Grand Hotel. It had not been well received, there was no denying that. There was a moment when Pauline had been ready to dedicate her life to the humiliation of her rival, as she secretly named her. But common-sense conquered. The Lesters were the only hold the Whitings had upon Chicago. Vengeance, if one may venture upon that lurid term, must wait. Alma was first to help Pauline to her natural place in Chicago, and then Pauline, to employ the phrase with a slightly altered meaning, meant to put Alma in her place. With this kindly intention Miss Whiting embarked with her stepmother in the early fall.

About nine months later, Mary and Pauline again sat where the patent rocker in peacock-blue crushed plush had once stood. Its place was now occupied by a deep cushioned chair, gay with chintz flounces. A soft June wind swayed the dainty muslin curtains to and fro and shook the leaves of the maples along Drexel Boulevard. The sun streamed across the pretty room, making the silver fixtures on the dressing-table sparkle and lighting up the pink and white fluffiness of Mrs. Whiting's negligee. It was a day, even in Chicago, to be idle, languorous and content now that summer had come at last.

But winter was in Pauline's heart. While Mary idly plucked at the lace ruffles of her gown, her stepdaughter, girt as if for action in a stiff shirtwaist, stood before her, waving a letter in the air.

"It's about that house at Lake Forest," she said; "we've got to decide whether we want to rent it or not. I don't. Do you?"

"Well, Pauline," was the reply, "I don't think it's a very pretty house, but we could take out a lot of things from here—you know this wasn't a very pretty house, but now it is."

"If we could carry this whole house I wouldn't want to go." Pauline looked thunderous.

"But I thought you did want to go——"

"So I did. But I wanted to go to Mrs. Hempy's dinner last week. I didn't go. Nor to the motoring thing the Lesters had at the Saddle Cycle Club."

"But that isn't the same thing," came from Mary soothingly.

"It is," Pauline answered. "I didn't go to those things because I wasn't asked. We're not asked to Lake Forest."

"Well, I guess this is a free country——"

"Why will you keep on saying 'guess'? I think it's so dead common," interrupted Pauline—and then went on with no pause for an answer: "You know what I mean. No one especially wants us to come out there for the summer—at least nobody wants us that we want to have want us. We must face facts."

"It seems to me you're always telling me to face facts." Mary's voice had a plaintive wail in it.

"No one wants us in Lake Forest," repeated Pauline, "any more than they do here."

"People have asked you out a good deal, Pauline."

"Have they?" inquired the girl satirically. "Oh, mother, you don't want me to go over the history of last year!"

Mary did not, it appeared, nor will the readers of this tale. Some of them may perhaps themselves have attempted to climb the ladder, and can supply for themselves the depressing details of the Whitings' winter.

"We are just as good as any of them," philosophized Pauline profoundly; "we've got as much money as most of them and we're ready to spend it. But I suppose it's no fun being in society unless you have some one to keep out."

"Of course I think myself that the Lesters have——"

"Don't speak of them to me!" Pauline strode fiercely across the room and sat down opposite Mary. "You saw through them, I hope. Alma introduced me to just enough people so that there would be an audience to see us fall down. What is their old social position, anyhow? I wonder if they've really got it in New York, or in London, as they say. Oh, if ever I get a chance——"

Pauline brooded gloomily, and the stepmother and stepdaughter sat a moment in silence, which the former broke.

"Well, we had a pleasant winter, anyhow. I'm sure I never had a pleasanter."

"I guess you haven't," retorted Pauline. Mary, tremblingly on the verge of tears, for a moment lifted her eyes to her stepdaughter. "I mean I expect you haven't—not in Cornell Avenue."

"I'm sorry I can't help you, Pauline. I wish I'd been fashionable."

"I'm sure I wish you had."

Mary was now quite in tears, but one might have observed her back stiffen a little at Pauline's tone. Pauline probably did not see.

"It makes it much harder for me, having to get two people everywhere."

Mary lifted her head; the tears had ceased to flow.

"Don't forget, Pauline," she said, with a note not usually in her voice, "that you've run this show yourself. I don't, for my part, think you were always right. You're so proud that you will pretend we're already the swellest of the swell when we aren't. I think sometimes if we were honester and quicker to take advantage of everything that turns up we might get on better. But goodness knows I never interfered. I allowed you to go enough places by yourself and I never went places by myself."

"I didn't know you were asked," said Pauline.

Mary rose, and went swiftly across the room, her dainty pink and white trailing after her gracefully. She took a note from a compartment in a pretty Sheraton desk and then, with it in her hand, stood before Pauline.

"Mrs. Hempy asked me to dinner and she didn't ask you," she said, "and I didn't go, neither did I tell you, because I thought you'd feel hurt. But if she asks me again I shall."

Pauline seized the note and read.

"But you ought to have gone!" she cried, and then her tears began to flow, from mixed motives perhaps. Mary seated herself in her chair and stared out across the lawn and the waving trees. Finally she spoke:

"I didn't mean to be cross, Pauline. I'm sorry things haven't gone as you wanted

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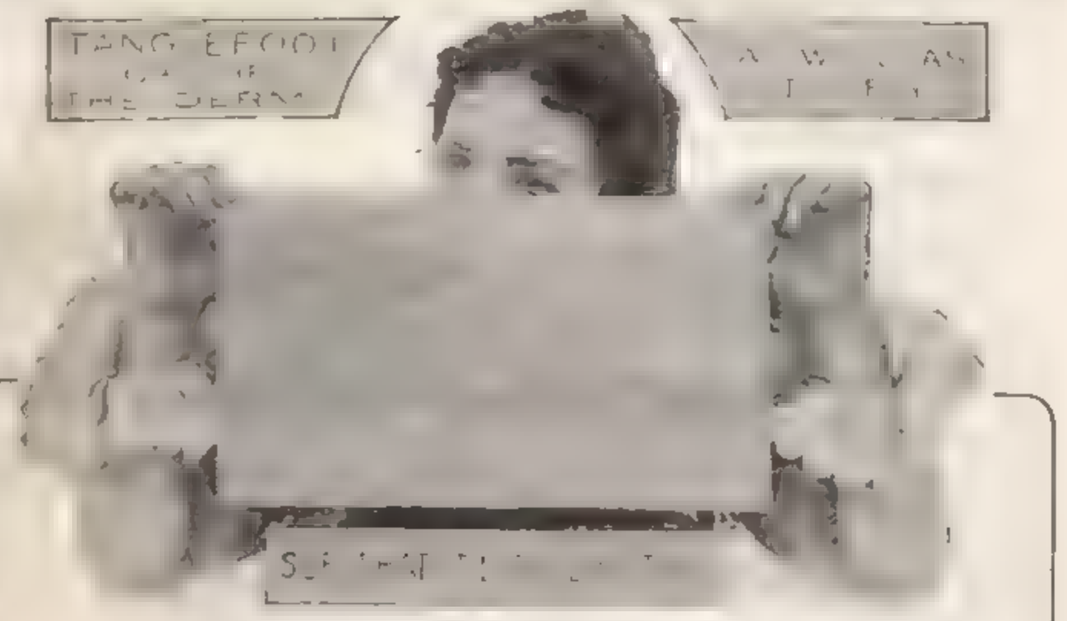

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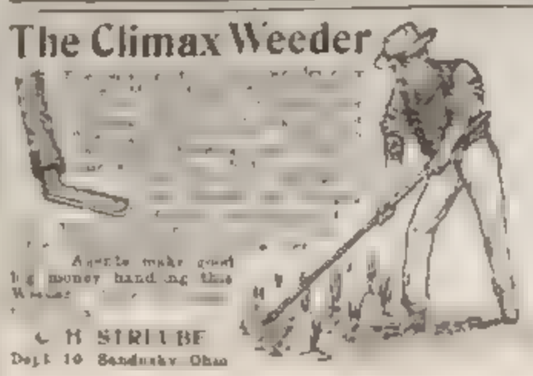

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Why let Baby cry [illegible]

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them to go here. Well, you're just a prophet without honor, that's all. I'd like to go abroad again. Chicago isn't the only place. I'm sure I always knew all the nicest people on Cornell Avenue, and I believe the world's about the same everywhere. And I've learned a good deal this winter. You come abroad and let mother have a try."

Pauline stole to her side, feeling dimly that she possessed a new and unrealized asset. Mary put her arm around her stepdaughter's shoulder.

"Mother, dear," began the girl, in an accent of unwonted tenderness, "I'm afraid I've been selfish. I want you in the future to enjoy yourself as much as possible. You're young and pretty, and——"

"Oh, that's all right, Pauline!" said Mary, and with a laugh her natural gayety returned. She rose and crossed the room with the pleasant undulating movement of our national dance.

Intelligent readers are asked to admire and note the cakewalk, for later other audiences, far more fashionable and important, will welcome it with enthusiasm. Mrs. Whiting's voice piped up with the cheerful words of a new and popular song:

"You've been a good little girl," she sang; "so come along with me!"

Pauline dabbed at her eyes jerkily and then——

"I'll come along," she said, "and I'll never come back to this old town until I can come back and show these people! Oh, I understand why American girls go abroad and live there and marry there!"

"Well," said her stepmother, "perhaps you'll marry there."

"I'd almost like to marry one of their old titles. I believe I would. That would show these Chicago people and that Alma Lester——"

"Well," said her stepmother soothingly, "perhaps you will, if that's what you want. I like to have people get what they want in this world. And I promised your father you should have your chance."

In a more subdued tone she sang again her little song with its lilting refrain. Pauline may not have been a very "good little girl," but she was destined to "come along."

(TO BE CONTINUED)

Seeking Investment: One Kind of Success

(Continued from Page 1)

and dauntless in his jousts with the great giants of industry, should be so subdued and meek before poor little me!"

And that's the way it seemed to me.

Without doubt, the next two or three weeks were the most anxious and trying that I had ever experienced. While Rainsford was away, working up certain details for our new project, I was making hurried journeys to distant cities, visiting the heaviest stockholders, and imploring them not to throw away their stock.

I told them that I, with others, was preparing a plan to circumvent the Standard Wool people, but that I was pledged to the most inviolate secrecy; that, if the faintest suspicion of our purpose should reach our enemies, our scheme would probably be crushed before we could make secure even the preliminary arrangements. My anxiety lest the great monopoly should be able to secure enough stock to control matters was almost unendurable.

And with it all I was compelled to devote some time to Elfrida—to listen to her poems, when my brain was distracted with stock quotations!

It was during one of these evenings, when she was reading something about

The hours when lovers' vows
Seem sweet in every whispered word,

that the idea came to me to make myself absolutely sure of her. I felt that I was in a cruelly uncertain position. If our new plan failed, and our great company was crippled, I was not at all certain that Rainsford would not raise obstacles to our marriage—and that would be just the contingency which would make this advantageous union so desirable to me.

So I roused up and made myself mournfully agreeable.

"Why art thou so sad, my Prince?" said Elfrida. "Forget all these Trusts and Companies and Things. As Longfellow so beautifully says:

Cares that infest the day
Shall fold their——"

But I interrupted with as heavy a sigh as I could manage:

"Elfie!" said I. "Dear little Elfie! It's so dreary waiting for our marriage. Your father is up to his neck in this business, and it is impossible to get him to think of us now. We've got to wait until these tangled skeins are all unraveled, and I can't stand it—unless——"

"Unless what, my Prince?"

"Unless we get married at once, Elfie. Why should we wait? I will get the license and we can go quietly around to the minister's without any one knowing it—just you and I, little Elfie!"

She gave a timid little scream, and said: "Oh, Dickie! How romantic! How did you ever think of it? How did you ever find time to think so much about poor little me, with your head so full of all these dividends and coupons and preferred stocks? But you won't have any preferred stocks when we are married, Dickie, will you? I won't have anything preferred to me. As Tennyson says——"

But I've forgotten what Tennyson said. The matter was settled—that was the main point—and the second afternoon after that Elfrida became Mrs. Dubble.

So that matter was off my mind, and I had an anchor to windward at a time when I felt sorely in need of it.

I was much surprised that the Wool Company made no serious attack upon our stock, and I was no less surprised that they addressed no communication to me on the subject. This was, I thought, conclusive that, although it had suited their desires to use me as a tool for organizing our company, or, as Grant had said, for "bunching it together so as to squeeze it all together," they felt perfectly competent to do the squeezing without any help from me. Evidently they were not yet ready, for the stock held up remarkably well, the quotations holding round about fifty-eight.

About the time, however, that Rainsford had nearly completed the work he was engaged on, I noticed some activity in the stock, and my broker wrote me that some parties were selling rather heavily. He followed this a day later with the information that the Standard Wool Company were undoubtedly the sellers. That woke me up—if I needed any awakening—and I soon was able to convince myself that very little stock had been sold by members of our company. The fact then dawned upon me that *the great Standard Wool Company were selling short!*

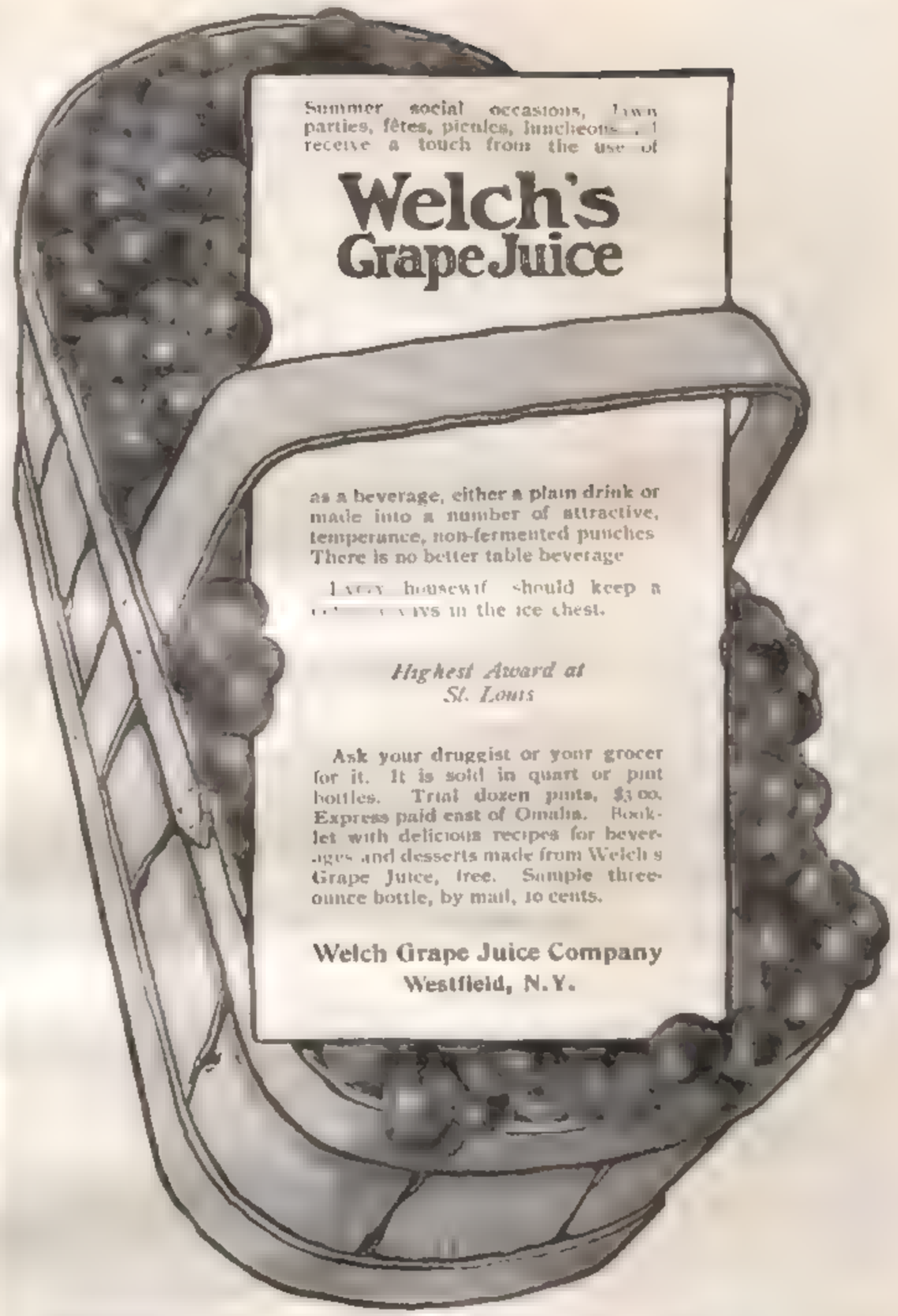
It was some little while before the full significance of this became clear to me, and when it did I was filled with admiration at the audacity and ingenuity of the scheme. They were putting out a big line to the unsuspecting public, and baiting it with rumors that they were shortly to take over the management of our affairs, their wonderful prestige gilding everything which they were supposed to have an eye on. Of course, when they were ready they would sturdily deny any connection with us, and, at the same time, throw the whole weight of their tremendous influence against the stock, and hammer it down to ruinous figures. Then, while pocketing enormous profits from the speculating public, they would, of course, buy in to suit themselves.

It was a beautiful scheme, and, as I thought it all over, a joyful peace stole over me, and I could have sung with the Psalmist: "Thou hast also given me the necks of mine enemies."

Then I wired to Rainsford to come back to Toonsville at once.

"It looks serious," said he, when I told him about the short selling. "They must feel pretty sure of breaking the price like the mischief, before long."

"It does look serious, Rainsford—for *them*, not us! Now, I've got over half a million in available cash." (This was from the ten thousand shares which I had judiciously sold.) "I propose to use it in a very unusual way for me. I'm going to speculate a little on margin. You'd better come in with me, and we'll take up all the short line those fellows are putting out, or at least as far as our cash will go."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He started back in alarm. Not much, Richard! It is one of my strictest rules never to speculate that way."

"This is not speculation," I retorted; "it is investment!"

"Nonsense!" said he emphatically.

I leaned toward him and whispered a few sentences in his ear. His eyes brightened and he sat back, staring at me.

"Whew! but you're a wonder, my boy! If you can do that I'm with you through it all. I guess I can raise three or four hundred thousand."

"All right," said I gleefully; "get ready for it and I will have the stockholders together without delay."

Four days later, by the use of most urgent and imperative requests, I got most of the stockholders to a private meeting in Toledo. I told them that the project I had hinted at was ready for adoption—that, without any question, it afforded certain and immediate independence of the Standard Wool Company and their railroads; but I added that, as its publicity would at once cause a jump in the stocks many of them would surely be tempted to market their holdings, and thus give the Standard Company the chance they were waiting for—to buy in. I said decidedly that I would run no risk of this—that it would defeat the end toward which I had been working day and night, and for which I was risking my all; and that, therefore, before I made known this project I should require them all to deposit their stock with the Union Trust Company, or any other depository, for a period of sixty days.

There was much surprise and demur at this. I told them that I would agree that, if the stock did not gain twenty points inside of ten days, they should again take possession of it. After a great deal of discussion and hesitancy, in which they found that I was immovable in my decision, they consented, and an agreement was drawn up to that effect. As soon as the signatures were affixed to this, Rainsford quietly slipped out of the room, and I proceeded to make known our new project.

"Gentlemen," said I, "all of you know of the Poweshie Creek which we have been intending to use for floating our logs to the new mill at Foggsboro'. Some of you have traveled along it and will remember that, at Bayle's Hill, sixteen miles from Foggsboro', it runs into the bed of the old Salada and Roxburgh Canal. It is thirty years since that canal was used—the railroads having put it out of commission—but it is still there—a big, grassy ditch; and when it is cleared out and the two locks reconstructed, it will be just as available for floating lumber barges as it was when it carried the grain output of Southern Ohio to the Miami River, and so to Lake Erie."

There were nearly three dozen men in that room, every one of whom I knew personally. Some were young and some were old—some were cautious and conservative, others dashing and speculative—but now they were all pretty much alike. As I looked around they were sitting on the edges of the chairs, their heads craned forward in strained expectancy. Many had their hands upon their knees, as if about to spring forward—I know not what for, whether to ask questions or to make suggestions—I only know that they were the most intensely interested crowd I'd ever seen.

"Gentlemen," I continued, "when Grant made those cruel charges against me, what my friends looked cold, and I could say with Job of old: 'They mar my path, they set forward my calamity!' I had no desire for retaliation. I was grieved—very deeply grieved; but my grief was mixed with the determination to show you and the world that I was no tool of the monstrous and rapacious Standard Wool Company. In seeking for light in my darkness and difficulty I chanced upon the old canal. I went to the State House and looked up the records. I found nothing in the charter by which it had become forfeited. I traveled alone and secretly along its old bed, to note its condition. I confided in Rainsford—the only man except myself who, up to this moment, knows anything of the project—and we have managed to buy up a majority of the old stock—all we could find, in fact—without raising suspicion of our purpose. To-day, he and I are practically owners of that canal. To-morrow we shall engage engineers to reconstruct the locks and clear out the bed. In three months we can tow barges from the Poweshie Creek to Salada and then transfer to schooners for shipment to any point on the Great Lakes. Our freights will be even better than before the Standard Wool Company opened on us. We shall be in shape to meet them in any lumber market, and we've ten thousand feet for every one thousand they have."

There was dead silence for a few moments when I had finished, then every man sprang to his feet and crowded around me, offering congratulations and good words in abundance.

When Rainsford slipped away from the meeting he went immediately to the telegraph office and wired our brokers to buy all the lumber stock offered, at about the price then quoted, fifty-six, and, after a short interview with me, he took the night train for New York.

Fully confident that our scheme for tying up the stock would succeed, we had already bought in over fifty thousand shares, the margin we put up calling for a quarter of a million dollars, and as the news of our canal project did not get into the papers until the following evening, we had one clear day in which we were able to secure about a hundred thousand more. Altogether, we were long on lumber stock to the enormous extent of a hundred and fifty thousand shares, while the great Standard Wool Company were *short* that amount; and over three-fourths of the entire stock was at that moment securely tied up in the Union Trust Company's vaults. We had them cornered and at our mercy.

Two weeks had to elapse before settlements could be called for, and "Consolidated Lumber" became the feature of the street. It was seen that a tremendous fight was on between Standard Wool and ourselves, and the rumor quickly spread that we had the stock cornered.

On the day that our canal plan was published—we took care that it was thoroughly done—the stock jumped eighteen points. Then followed a storm of sneers and denials. The canal was useless—the charter had been long forfeited—the canal didn't run within twenty miles of our property—the water had been diverted to other channels and we had nothing but a dry and useless ditch.

But all this availed them nothing. I joined Rainsford in New York, and we had little to do but laugh and wait—and watch the stock climb up! The great company desperately sought cover, and bid the stock up themselves, but, of course, none was forthcoming. Then there was a lull, and our brokers—we were now working with several—bought and sold small blocks, each time boosting the price. Up—up it went! Past a hundred—a hundred and ten—a hundred and fifteen, fighting every inch of the way, until, on the day of settlement we pushed it up to a hundred and twenty, and there we halted them.

Then it was a magnificent deal, and the loss was worthy of the great Standard Wool Company. They had dropped over eight million dollars and we had gathered it in. They had secured in the scramble about seventy-five thousand shares, and these they turned over to us in settlement, together with three million eight hundred thousand dollars in cash.

And as the words of John Strang came again to my mind—"The king's wrath is as the roaring of a lion"—I felt that I could smile at it all. For I argued to myself this way: "Here am I, a little Indiana banker and promoter, who has pulled the wool over the eyes of the greatest speculators in the world. Surely I can do a little roaring myself!"

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One inch won't make you very tall;
You've got to keep on growing.
One little "ad." won't do it all;
You've got to keep 'em going.

An Ad—Vantage

He who would add unto his trade
Should have an "ad.," and well displayed.
For "ads.," if one knows how to write 'em,
Add to one's trade *ad infinitum*.

Retrospective

"There are no birds in last year's nests,"
No dollar bills in last year's vests;
And 'tisn't wise to hope that "scads"
Will still flow in from last year's "ads."

An Ad—Dition

A man who owns a great big store
With stocks of goods on every floor,
May, to his keenest sorrow, find
The public to his wares is blind.
And though he add all he may guess
Would likely add to his success,
His bank account may never rise
Till he concludes to add—vertise.

A Lump of Logic

The time to quit (it seems to me
This truth is past denying)
Our advertising ought to be
When all the world quits buying.
—*Nixon Waterman.*

Exploding the Green-Apple Germ

THERE is no such thing as a green-apple germ. Two German scientists of reputation, Doctor Otto and Doctor Kenzel, have been making an investigation of the subject, and they find that, while children who eat green apples are sometimes made sick, it is not, as a rule, anything in the fruit that is accountable for the mischief.

Unquestionably, unripe fruit of various kinds sometimes makes people very ill. On the other hand, it is often eaten without producing any bad result. If it were so dangerous as is popularly supposed, say the investigators quoted, there would hardly be a well child in the good old summer time.

In order to get at the exact facts, chemical analyses were made of apples, pears, cherries and other fruits, in various stages of unripeness, and quantities of unripe fruits were fed to human beings, rabbits and guinea-pigs, under all conditions. The problem was attacked from every side.

The final conclusion drawn was that fruits in an insufficiently ripened state are liable to be indigestible and unwholesome, particularly to children. But in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred they do no harm, and, in the exceptional instances where they cause serious illness, it is not the fruit itself that is really responsible. A germ it is that is accountable for the trouble, but not one that has anything to do, for example, with the green apple.

A green apple, that is to say, falls to the ground. It lies there for a while, accumulating more or less dirt. Along comes a small boy, picks up the apple, and devours it—naturally, without any regard for possible microbes. But microbes there may be, and they may cause a serious attack of colic.

In order that the matter may not be misunderstood in future, however, it should be realized that the accidental bacterium from the soil, and not any unripeness of the fruit, does the wicked work.

Animated Sea-Water

JELLYFISHES have been made the subject of recent study by the United States Fish Commission—not because those animals are useful, but for the reason that they are curious. For one thing, they contain more water in proportion to their bulk than any other living creature. If one of them be placed upon a sheet of blotting-paper, or any other clean surface, and left there for a few hours, hardly a trace of it will remain. A slight stain, in fact, will be all that is distinguishable. "Animated sea-water" is the term applied to the jellyfishes by Dr. Charles W. Hargitt.

Although jellyfishes are actually ninety-nine per cent. water, they are fairly complex in their make-up. In size they vary from a pin-head to eight feet in diameter, having somewhat the shape of umbrellas. From the margin of the umbrella hang numerous tentacles, sometimes as much as thirty feet in length, which are armed with stinging cells, in large species so powerful as to give a shock comparable to that of an electric battery.

Jellyfishes use their tentacles for the capture of prey, such as small fishes and crustaceans, which they sting to death. They move in the water by opening and shutting the umbrella above mentioned, from the middle of which hangs an apparatus identified by naturalists as the stomach and mouth of the creature. Around the edge of the umbrella are crystal-like bodies which are supposed to fulfill in some way the function of eyes, but the matter is somewhat uncertain. One thing that is known beyond a doubt is that these odd animals do not live more than a year, the largest species growing from the size of a penny to a diameter of seven or eight feet in a twelvemonth. All of them are phosphorescent—but that phenomenon is a mystery which, though Mr. Langley says it is probably due to a decomposition of animal fats, must be regarded as among the still unsolved problems of Nature.

By the Beard of the Colonels

O'CONNELL'S famous parody of Dryden, in ridicule of three members of Parliament—Colonels Sibthorp, Perceval and Verner—which produced a roar of laughter, has rarely been surpassed:

"Three colonels, in three distant counties born,
Lincoln, Armagh and Sligo did adorn.
The first in matchless impudence surpassed,
The next in bigotry—in both, the last.
The force of Nature could no further go—
To beard the third she shaved the other two."

Two of these gentlemen looked as if they had never needed a razor—the third (Sibthorp) as if he repudiated one. In nicknames O'Connell was especially happy, as in his "Scorpion Stanley" and "Spinning-jenny Peel." The smile of the latter, he said, was "like the silver plate on a coffin."

Electric Bait for Fishes

THE New York Aquarium, which is the largest and best equipped institution of its kind in the world, obtains its supplies of tropical fishes from the waters of Bermuda. Some of the rarest and most beautiful species are exceedingly hard to catch, persistently refusing to take a bait, and on this account it has been found necessary to resort to a very novel and ingenious expedient to effect their capture—an electrical contrivance, which serves to stun the coveted specimen and reduce it to helplessness until it can be made a prisoner.

The device in question consists in part of a small and compact storage battery, which is held in a leather pouch beneath the arm of the operator, who wades as quietly as possible through the shallows and invades, with as little disturbance as may be, pools among the rocks. He carries a long-handled dip-net, to the handle of which a wire is attached. On the end of the wire is fastened a small percussion cap, of the kind used for exploding dynamite cartridges. It is the bursting of the cap that is relied upon to stun the fish.

Luckily for the hunter, fishes have as much curiosity as land animals, and even the shyest one will approach a bait to look at it, though indisposed to attempt the slightest nibble. Accordingly, the percussion cap at the end of the wire is concealed either by something eatable or by a bunch of grass wrapped around it. Mr. Fish wonders what it is, ventures near, and has instant reason to regret his imprudence. The fisherman closes the circuit, the percussion cap is exploded, and the victim is rendered, for the moment, lifeless, though receiving no permanent injury. Promptly, by reversing the dip-net, he is gathered in, and a few days later he finds himself swimming about in a tank.

The fishes from Bermuda are carried to New York on steamers, of course, and it is a curious fact that, during the first twenty-four hours of the voyage, they are liable to become quite seasick.

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The Triumphs of Eugène Valmont

(Concluded from Page 6)

"Read them," she replied, taking a folded sheet from her pocket and handing it to me.

She had been quite right in characterizing the note as an extraordinary epistle. The Honorable John Haddon had the temerity to propose that she should go through a form of marriage with him at the old church we had just left. If she did that, he said, it would console him for the mad love he felt for her. The ceremony would have no binding force upon her whatever, and she might bring whom she pleased to perform it. If she had no one whom she could trust he would invite an old college chum, and bring him to the church next morning at half-past seven o'clock. Even if an ordained clergyman performed the ceremony it would not be legal unless it took place between the hours of eight in the morning and three in the afternoon. If she consented to this, the emeralds were hers once more.

"That is the proposal of a madman," said I, as I handed back the letter.

"Well," she replied with a nonchalant shrug of her shoulders, "he has always said he was madly in love with me, and I quite believe it. Poor young man, if this mummery were to console him for the rest of his life, why should I not indulge him in it?"

"Surely you would not countenance the profaning of that lovely old edifice with a mock ceremonial?"

Once more her eyes were twinkling with merriment.

"But the Honorable John Haddon, as I have told you, is not in his senses."

"Then why should you indulge him?"

"Why? How can you ask such a question? Because of the emeralds. It is only a mad lark, after all, and no one shall know of it. Oh, Monsieur Valmont!" she cried pleadingly, clasping her hands—and yet it seemed to me with an undercurrent of laughter in her beseeching tones—"will you not enact for us the part of clergyman?"

"Lady Alicia, you are incorrigible. I am somewhat of a man of the world, yet I should not dare to counterfeit the sacred office, and I hope you but jest."

She turned away from me with a very pretty pout.

"Monsieur Valmont, your knighthood is, after all, but surface deep. 'Tis not mine to command, and yours to obey, as you said a moment since. Certainly I did but jest. John shall bring his own bogus clergyman with him."

"Are you going to meet him to-morrow?"

"Of course. I *must* recover my necklace."

"You seem to have great confidence that he will produce it."

"If he fails to do so, then I have Monsieur Valmont as my trump card. But, monsieur, although you quite rightly refuse to comply with my first request, you will surely not reject my second. Will you meet me to-morrow at the head of the avenue, promptly at a quarter-past seven, and escort me to the church?"

For a moment the negative trembled on my tongue's end, but she turned those enchanting eyes upon me, and I was undone.

"Yes," I answered.

She seized both my hands like a little girl overjoyed at a promised excursion.

"Oh, Monsieur Valmont, you are a darling! I feel as if I'd known you all my life. I am sure you will never regret having humored me."

It was shortly after seven o'clock next day when I reached the rendezvous. The Lady Alicia was somewhat long in putting in an appearance, but when she arrived her face was aglow with girlish delight at the solemn prank she was about to play.

"You have not changed your mind?"

"Oh, no, Monsieur Valmont!" she replied, with a bright laugh. "I am determined to get those emeralds again!"

"We must hurry, Lady Alicia, or we shall be too late."

"There is plenty of time," she remarked, and she proved to be right, because when we came in sight of the church the clock pointed to the hour of half-past seven.

"Now," she said, "I shall wait here until you steal up to the church and look in through one of the windows that do not contain stained glass. I would not for the world arrive before Mr. Haddon and his friend were there."

I did as requested, and saw two young men standing together in the centre aisle, one in the full robes of a clergyman of the Church of England, the other in his ordinary dress, whom I took to be the Honorable John Haddon. His profile was toward me, and I must admit there was very little of the madman in his calm countenance. It was a well-cut face, clean shaven, and strikingly manly. In one of the pews was seated a woman, whom I learned afterward was Lady Alicia's maid, who had been instructed to come and go from the house by the footpath, while we had taken the longer road. I returned and escorted Lady Alicia to the church, and there was introduced to Mr. Haddon and his friend the made-up divine. The ceremony was at once performed, and, man of the world as I professed to be, this enacting of private theatricals in a church grated upon me. When the maid and I were asked to sign the book as witnesses, I said:

"Surely that is carrying realism a little too far?"

Mr. Haddon smiled, and replied suavely:

"I am amazed to hear a Frenchman objecting to realism going to its full length, and, speaking for myself, I should be delighted to see the autograph of the renowned Eugène Valmont." And with that he proffered me the pen, whereupon I scrawled my signature. The maid had already signed, and had disappeared. The reputed clergyman bowed us out of the church.

"Ed," cried John Haddon, "I'll be back within half an hour, and we'll attend to the clock. You won't mind waiting?"

"Not in the least, dear boy. God bless you both!"

And the tremor in his voice seemed to me carrying realism still one step further.

The Lady Alicia hurried us on with downcast head until we were within the gloom of the forest, and then, ignoring me, she turned suddenly to the young man, and placed her two hands on his shoulders.

"Oh, Jack, Jack!" she cried.

He kissed her twice on the lips.

"Jack, Monsieur Valmont insists on the emeralds."

The young man laughed. Her ladyship stood fronting him, with her back toward me. Tenderly the young man unfastened something at the throat of that high-necked dress of hers; then there was a snap, and he drew out an amazing, dazzling, shimmering sheen of green, that seemed to turn the whole bleak December landscape verdant as with a touch of spring. The girl hid her rosy face against him, and over her shoulder with a smile he handed me the celebrated Blair emeralds.

"There is the treasure, Valmont," he cried, "on condition that you do not molest the culprit!"

"Or the accessory after the fact," gurgled Lady Alicia in smothered tones, with a hand clasping her high-necked dress at the throat.

"We trust to your invention, Valmont, to deliver that necklace to uncle with a detective story that will thrill him."

We heard the clock strike eight, and then a second later the chime for quarter-past, and another second after the chime for half-past.

"Ah," cried Haddon, "Ed has attended to the clock himself! What a good fellow he is."

I looked at my watch: it was twenty-five minutes to nine.

"Was the ceremony genuine, then?" I asked.

"Ah, Valmont," said the young man, patting his wife affectionately on the shoulder, "nothing on earth is more genuine than that ceremony was."

And the volatile Lady Alicia snuggled closer to him.

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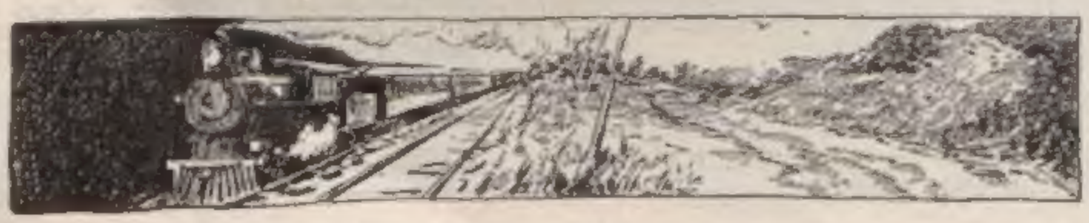

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